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# A Phenomenological Investigation of Supervisors' and Supervisees' Experiences with Attention to Cultural Issues in Multicultural Supervision

Amy L. McLeod

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## ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF SUPERVISORS' AND SUPERVISEES' EXPERIENCES WITH ATTENTION TO CULTURAL ISSUES IN MULTICULTURAL SUPERVISION, by AMY LAND MCLEOD, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

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Amy Land McLeod

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## ABSTRACT

### A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF SUPERVISORS' AND SUPERVISEES' EXPERIENCES WITH ATTENTION TO CULTURAL ISSUES IN MULTICULTURAL SUPERVISION

by  
Amy L. McLeod

This study investigated the experiences of supervisors and supervisees involved in multicultural supervision, specifically regarding how cultural issues are addressed in supervision, the impact of attention to cultural issues on the supervisory relationship, and the impact of attention to cultural issues on supervisees' development of perceived multicultural counseling competence (MCC). Six supervisors and nine supervisees who differed from each other on at least one cultural variable (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, spiritual identity, age, ability status, and socioeconomic status) participated. The participating supervisees were receiving supervision from one of the participating supervisors at the time this study took place. Data were collected through individual, semi-structured interviews and a demographic information sheet. Data were analyzed using a phenomenological framework, which involved coding transcribed interviews and organizing codes into themes that express the essence of participants' experiences. Themes that describe how cultural issues are addressed in supervision include frequency, responsibility for initiation of cultural discussion, supervisor's role in

addressing cultural issues, degree of intentionality, and scope of attention to culture.

Participants also described positive and negative experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision and the impact of these experiences on the supervisory relationship.

Themes associated with the impact of positive experiences include cohesion/bonding, safety, and awareness. Themes associated with the impact of negative experiences include supervisee withdrawal, decreased feelings of competence, and improvement.

Participants described factors contributing to the development of perceived supervisee MCC including supervisor techniques and characteristics, supervision process and experiences, clinical experience, coursework, and supervision has no impact on MCC.

Implications for counselor education programs and supervisory practice are discussed.



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Amy L. McLeod

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in  
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in  
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2008

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACA	American Counseling Association
APA	American Psychological Association
CACREP	Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
HMNID	Heuristic Model of Nonoppressive Interpersonal Development
MCC	Multicultural Counseling Competence

## CHAPTER 1

### MULTICULTURAL SUPERVISION: WHAT DO WE KNOW NOW?

Multicultural supervision involves the intersection of diverse cultural backgrounds in the triadic relationship among a supervisor, supervisee, and client. The goals of multicultural supervision include addressing cultural issues in the counselor/supervisee-client relationship and the supervisor-supervisee relationship and fostering cultural competence in the supervisee (McLeod & Chang, in press). For the purposes of this chapter, the term “multicultural” is defined broadly to include race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual identity, religious/spiritual identity, ability status, and socioeconomic status.

The importance of addressing multicultural issues in counseling and supervision is highlighted by the multicultural counseling competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992), the American Counseling Association (ACA, 2005), the American Psychological Association (APA, 2003) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009). The multicultural counseling competencies stress the need for professional counselors to seek awareness of their own assumptions and biases, to understand the worldviews of culturally different clients, and to develop appropriate intervention strategies for working with culturally diverse clients. The ACA Code of Ethics states that counselor educators are responsible for infusing multicultural and diversity issues into all counseling courses and workshops, as well as addressing multicultural issues in the supervisory relationship. The APA Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for



Psychologists encourage the employment of the constructs of multiculturalism and diversity in psychological education and training. The proposed CACREP standards require counselor training programs to provide counselor trainees with educational experiences that result in an understanding of the cultural context of relationships, multicultural trends and concerns, the role of the counselor in social justice and advocacy work, and an increased level of knowledge, skills, and awareness of attitudes and beliefs related to working with a culturally diverse population.

Within the supervisory relationship, counselor trainees have the opportunity for tremendous learning and growth related to multiculturalism; however, research on multiculturalism neglects the area of supervision to a large degree. In 1994, Leong and Wagner conducted a critical review of the conceptual and empirical literature on multicultural supervision and revealed a paucity of information on this critically important topic. Since 1994, there has been a marked increase in the attention devoted to multicultural supervision in the counseling literature; however, there are still gaps in our knowledge base. Consequently, in this chapter I review and critique the 12 conceptual journal articles, 12 conceptual book chapters, and 24 empirical articles on multicultural supervision, identified through Academic Search Complete and GALILEO searches for multicultural supervision literature, that have been published since Leong and Wagner's review. In addition, future directions for research are explored.

### Conceptual Literature

Since 1994, the majority of the conceptual articles can be categorized into the following themes: (a) models for multicultural supervision; (b) potential challenges in

multicultural supervisory relationships; and (c) suggestions for competent multicultural supervisory practices.

### *Models for Multicultural Supervision*

Numerous authors have delineated models for multicultural supervision. Martínez and Holloway (1997) proposed the Systems Approach to Supervision (SAS) model for multicultural supervision, which examines the relationships between contextual factors (e.g., cultural characteristics, experiences, needs, and perspectives of the supervisor, supervisee, and client and the ethics, climate, and organizational structure of the institution), supervision functions (e.g., evaluation, teaching, modeling, consulting, supporting), supervision tasks (e.g., counseling skill, case conceptualization, professional identity, emotional awareness, self-evaluation) and the supervisory relationship. The SAS model also emphasizes engaging supervisees, building a professional relationship, focusing on content and process in supervision and in counseling, and empowering the counselor trainee through acquisition of knowledge and skills. Another model for multicultural supervision is González's (1997) postmodern approach that integrates Interpersonal Process Recall (Kagan, 1976), the Discrimination Model (Bernard, 1979), and live supervision techniques to create an environment in which supervisors, supervisees, and clients can all share the truth of their own personal experiences. González's model encourages the supervisor to approach supervision collaboratively by valuing the expertise of supervisees and clients. In addition, González's model advises supervisors to attend to language usage, supervisees' expression of strong emotion in supervision, and client verbal and nonverbal statements for insight into the cultural beliefs and worldviews of supervisees and their clients.

Several authors (e.g., Chen, 2001; Garrett et al., 2001; Nelson, 1997) have proposed interactional models of multicultural supervision. Interactional models offer a framework for understanding how cultural patterns of communication, behavior, perception, expectation, and beliefs may influence the supervisory relationship. Garrett et al. suggested the VISION model of supervision, which examines the values and belief systems of the supervisor and supervisee, the supervisee's interpretation of experiences in counseling and supervision, how the supervisor structures the supervisory relationship and models structuring of the counseling relationship and process for the supervisee, the preferred communication styles of the supervisor and supervisee, the intentionality of the supervisor and supervisee in selecting operational strategies to achieve desired goals, and perceived needs of the supervisor and supervisee. By attending to these variables in supervision, supervisors are able to increase their effectiveness in understanding the worldview of culturally different supervisees and in training supervisees to be effective multicultural counselors (Garrett et al.). An interactional model for empowering women in supervision, developed by Nelson, examines how the power differential between the supervisor and supervisee and women's preference for affiliation and encouragement may change throughout the course of the supervisory relationship. This model suggests that supervisors should monitor their use of power in supervision and exercise mindfulness and purposefulness when providing critical feedback related to the counseling skills of female supervisees. Chen also advocated for the use of an interactional approach to multicultural supervision; however, Chen focused primarily on preparing counselors to be intentional and self-monitoring practitioners, thereby neglecting the interactional patterns of the supervisor and supervisee.

In an attempt to address the impact of the interaction of the supervisor's cultural identity and the supervisee's cultural identity on the supervisory relationship, several authors (Chang, Hays, & Shoffner, 2003; Cook, 1994; D'Andrea & Daniels, 1997) have proposed racial identity development models for multicultural supervision. In terms of Helms and Carter's (1990) White racial identity development model and Atkinson, Morten, and Sue's (1998) racial identity development model for people of color, the racial identities of supervisors and supervisees within dyads can be described as parallel (i.e., similar levels of racial identity development), progressive (i.e., supervisor at a more advanced level of racial identity development than supervisee), or regressive (i.e., supervisee at a more advanced level of racial identity development than supervisor) (Chang et al.; Cook). Racial identity development models of supervision predict that progressive and parallel dyads at high levels of racial identity development will lead to the most beneficial supervisory relationships. These models also warn of the dangers associated with regressive supervisory dyads and supervisory dyads in which both the supervisor and supervisee are at low levels of racial identity development, including avoiding or inappropriately addressing cultural issues in supervision (Chang et al.; D'Andrea & Daniels).

One of the most comprehensive multicultural supervision models available is the Heuristic Model of Nonoppressive Interpersonal Development (H.M.N.I.D.; Ancis & Ladany, 2001). The H.M.N.I.D. allows for the examination of cultural identity development for variables including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability, and socioeconomic status and recognizes that for any cultural variable individuals can either belong to a socially oppressed group or a socially privileged group. It is possible for one

person to be a member of privileged and oppressed groups simultaneously (e.g., African American and male, heterosexual and female). For each cultural variable, individuals progress through stages of thoughts and feelings about the cultural variable and behaviors based on identification with the variable. The developmental stages are (a) adaptation (e.g., complacency, apathy, conformity to oppressive environment, minimal awareness of oppression, melting-pot view), (b) incongruence (e.g., cognitive dissonance due to increased awareness of oppressive events, questioning beliefs about cultural variables), (c) exploration (e.g., active search for meaning regarding belonging to a cultural group, anger and guilt related to prior unawareness, potential for hypervigilance regarding oppressive events), and (d) integration (e.g., awareness of oppression and privilege, multicultural integrity, integration of feelings, behavioral promotion of nonoppression, ability to empathize with members of various cultural groups). The H.M.N.I.D. allows for comparison of supervisor and supervisee levels of identity development and predicts supervisory and counseling interactions in each level of development. The basic task of the supervisor, according to Ancis and Ladany, is to facilitate supervisee growth and awareness, leading to a more advanced level of cultural identity development.

### *Challenges and Recommendations for Multicultural Supervision*

Many authors have written conceptual articles that focus on commonly encountered challenges in multicultural supervision and make recommendations for improved supervisory practices. Several authors (e.g., Estrada, Frame, & Williams, 2004; McNeill, Hom, & Perez, 1995; Priest, 1994) have described difficulties and errors that occur within the context of multicultural supervision. For example, racial and ethnic minority supervisees may have difficulty integrating their professional counseling

identity, which is largely based on White male values, with their ethnic identities. In addition, supervisees of color may feel compelled to withhold information from their supervisors regarding a minority client's behaviors for fear of reinforcing group stereotypes (McNeill et al.). White supervisors who lack multicultural competence may depend on racial and ethnic minority supervisees for direction and incorrectly assume that a racial or ethnic minority supervisee is an expert in dealing with clients from similar cultural backgrounds as the supervisee (McNeill et al.). When working with culturally diverse supervisees, supervisors may also overemphasize the belief that all cultural variations in behavior are to be equally valued and thereby fail to challenge the supervisees' cultural practices that may not be beneficial to the counseling relationship and process (Estrada et al.). Supervisors may also make the mistake of avoiding racial issues altogether or addressing race and ethnicity too simplistically (Estrada et al.). Racial and ethnic minority supervisors who work with White supervisees may be the focus of supervisees' prejudice and may experience difficulty in assisting supervisees to identify biases (Priest).

Numerous authors have provided suggestions for effectively attending to cultural issues in supervision. It is generally agreed that competent multicultural supervisors should address the power differential inherent in the supervisory relationship (Estrada et al., 2004; Fong & Lease, 1997; Grant, 1999). In addition, White supervisors are advised to acknowledge their White privilege and discuss the impact of racism, oppression, and privilege on the supervisory relationship, counseling relationship, and personal development (Fong & Lease; Hays & Chang, 2003). Also, the responsibility for initiating discussion of cultural issues in supervision rests with the supervisor and should begin

early in the supervisory relationship (Estrada et al.; Grant). Supervisors are advised to begin supervision with a discussion of the expectations and fears of supervisees and then work to build a safe atmosphere by using a collaborative approach to supervision characterized by openness, trust, and respect (Fong & Lease). Competent multicultural supervisors are also advised to examine their own cultural backgrounds and biases (Fong & Lease; Rigazio-DiGilio, 1998), demonstrate knowledge of supervisees' cultural backgrounds (Fong & Lease; Grant), address the larger sociocultural context in which supervision occurs (Fuertes, 2004; McNeill et al., 1995; Rigazio-DiGilio), and examine how the interaction of the cultural identities of the supervisor and supervisee impact the supervisory relationship (Estrada et al.). Supervisors are also encouraged to examine critically their biases and assumptions about other racial and ethnic groups and be mindful of not communicating unintentional racism, such as the excessive praise of minority students indicating an underlying belief that they have surpassed low expectations (Grant; McNeill et al.). Additionally, supervisors are advised to attend to the diverse communication and learning styles of supervisees of color (Fong & Lease; Grant; McNeill et al.; Rigazio-DiGilio).

Suggested supervisory practices specific to addressing the cultural dimensions of gender, ability status, and sexual identity have also been identified in the literature. Nelson and Holloway (1999) suggested that supervisors in both same-gender and cross-gender supervisory relationships should strive to understand their own "gendered-world" (p. 33) and address power in the supervisory and counseling relationships. When working with supervisees with disabilities, supervisors are encouraged to ensure that the supervisory environment is accessible, to be aware that there are visible and invisible

disabilities, and to recognize that language can be oppressive (Spy & Oyston, 1999). Instead of referring to a supervisee or client as handicapped or the disabled supervisee, the supervisor is advised to make a conscious effort to acknowledge the person first (e.g., a woman or man with a disability). The use of language is also critical when addressing sexual identity in supervision. Hitchings (1999) recommended the use “gay affirmative” language (p. 57). Supervisors are also encouraged to examine their personal definition of sexual orientation and to help supervisees develop awareness of homophobia, heterosexism, internalized homophobia, and the coming out process. When supervisees are working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transsexual clients, supervisors are advised to ensure that the supervisee avoids over or under emphasizing the impact of sexual identity for clients (Hitchings).

The unique multicultural issues associated with supervision of psychological assessment and bilingual counseling have also been addressed in the literature. Allen (2007) made recommendations for competence in multicultural assessment supervision, including assuring culturally congruent assessment service and delivery, providing culture-specific interpretive processes, and communicating assessment results through report writing in a culturally appropriate manner. Fuertes (2004) recommended that supervisors of bilingual counselors assess the language preference of the supervisee, assess the supervisee’s level of acculturation, and monitor the supervisee’s language switching patterns in order to identify potential issues in supervision (e.g., embarrassment, conflicts with values). Supervisors are also advised to demonstrate an appreciation of language and cultural conceptions of health and coping, model flexibility in the use of



theory and interventions, and recognize that all bilingual counseling is not competent counseling (Fuentes).

Ancis and Ladany (2001) put forth more formal recommendations for supervision in the form of the Multicultural Supervision Competencies for Ethical Practice. The goals of the Multicultural Supervision Competencies are to provide a detailed description of how the multicultural competencies are manifest in supervision, to move beyond discussions of cultural issues in supervision that focus exclusively on race and ethnicity by defining culture broadly to include multiple and complex dimensions of identity, to provide a means of holding supervisors accountable for competent and ethical practice, and to facilitate systematic empirical research based on the competencies. The Multicultural Supervision Competencies focus on the domains of supervisor-focused personal development, supervisee-focused personal development, conceptualization, skills and interventions, process, and outcome and evaluation.

The body of conceptual literature on multicultural supervision published since 1994 advances understanding of the role of cultural issues in the supervisory relationship. The models of multicultural supervision view the cultural interactions of the supervisor, supervisee, and client as central to the supervision process and offer frameworks for understanding and improving the relationship between supervisors and supervisees, empowering supervisees and fostering the supervisees' development of cultural competence. Articles that highlight common errors and difficulties in multicultural supervision and provide practical suggestions for effective supervisory practices are valuable resources for multicultural supervisors, as are the Multicultural Supervision Competencies (Ancis & Ladany, 2001), which provide clearly delineated guidelines for

competent multicultural supervision practices. In addition to conceptual literature, more empirical research is needed on the effects of errors in multicultural supervision and the effectiveness of the suggested strategies and models of multicultural supervision.

### Empirical Research on Multicultural Supervision

The empirical studies on multicultural supervision that have been published since 1994 can be organized primarily in four categories: (a) studies investigating supervisor multicultural competence; (b) studies investigating supervisors' and supervisees' perceptions of positive and negative experiences in multicultural supervision and the impact these experiences have on the supervisory relationship and supervisee development; (c) studies investigating the influence of racial identity development on the supervisory relationship and supervisee development; and (d) assessment instruments designed to measure supervisory multicultural competence.

#### *Supervisor Multicultural Competence*

The studies on supervisor multicultural competence address supervisor training, how attention is given to multicultural issues in supervision, the impact of supervisor multicultural competence on the supervisory relationship, and recommended practices for competent multicultural supervision. With regard to supervisor training, Constantine (1997) found that 70% of supervisors never had coursework in multicultural counseling, while 70% of supervisees had completed a multicultural counseling course. In addition, research has shown that supervisees may be more sensitive to cultural issues than supervisors (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). Though cultural discussions are critical in supervision, they occur at a low frequency (Gatmon et al., 2001). Reportedly only 15% of time in supervision is spent discussing multicultural issues (Constantine) and supervisors

typically report making more of an attempt to address cultural issues in supervision than is perceived by supervisees (Duan & Roehlke).

Using the Multicultural Supervision Competencies (Ancis & Ladany, 2001) as a framework, Ancis and Marshall (in press) conducted a qualitative analysis of supervisees' perspectives of multiculturally competent supervisory practices. Themes related to perceptions of supervisor multicultural competence were categorized according to the five domains of the Multicultural Supervision Competencies: (a) supervisor and supervisee focused personal development (e.g., demonstrates limits of multicultural knowledge, proactively introduces multicultural issues, uses self-disclosure, demonstrates and encourages cultural awareness); (b) client conceptualization (e.g., encourages examination of supervisees' assumption and biases, encourages exploration of clients' worldviews); (c) skills and interventions (e.g., encourages collaborative goal setting with clients, encourages supervisee facilitation of client awareness of social issues); (d) process (e.g., conveys acceptance of cultural diversity in supervisory relationships, acknowledges power differentials, and creates a safe supervisory environment); and (e) outcome/evaluation (e.g., identifies supervisees' strengths and weaknesses regarding multicultural competency, supervisory practices related to positive client outcomes).

Researchers have also examined the relationship between race and ethnicity and supervisor competence. Racial and ethnic minority supervisors typically spend more time discussing multicultural issues in supervision than White supervisors and White supervisors are more likely to discuss multicultural issues with racial and ethnic minority supervisees than with White supervisees (Hird, Tao, & Gloria, 2005). The supervisor's racial and ethnic background is also related to exploration of the supervisee's level of

cultural competence. Estrada (2005) reported that African American supervisors explored supervisees' understanding of culturally diverse clients' worldviews more often than White or Hispanic supervisors, and African American supervisors explore supervisees' use of culturally appropriate intervention strategies more often than White supervisors.

In addition to exploring the relationship between race and ethnicity and supervisor competence, researchers have also examined supervisor competence in relation to gender. Content analysis of audio taped clinical supervision sessions revealed different supervisory interactions with male and female supervisees: Male supervisors were more frequently asked for opinions and suggestions, while female supervisees were told what to do more often than males (Granello, Beamish, & Davis, 1997). Research has also indicated that a supervisor's level of multicultural competence is positively related to the working alliance in the supervisory relationship and supervisee satisfaction with supervision (Inman, 2006).

Finally, recommendations for competent multicultural supervision have been generated based on dialogues with supervisors and a case study of cross-cultural supervision. Nelson et al. (2006) reported the findings of a two-day discussion among members of the Section for the Advancement of Women regarding what truly feminist-multicultural supervision involves. Participants in this study emphasized that supervisors working from a feminist, multicultural perspective should model taking risks in supervision, reject linear models of supervisee development in favor of more complex conceptualizations of development, recognize that anxiety and ambiguity are unavoidable when discussing cultural issues and that this discomfort can produce growth and therefore should not be avoided, encourage and support colleagues who attempt to understand and

address cultural differences in supervision, and acknowledge that traditional methods of supervision are based on a Eurocentric model and have an inherent power structure.

A group interview with ethnic minority marriage and family counseling supervisors regarding how they address cultural issues in supervision yielded additional recommendations for competent multicultural supervision (Taylor, Hernández, Deri, Rankin, & Siegel, 2006). Participants advised supervisors to initiate cultural discussions in supervision, to examine the interactions of supervisor and supervisee cultural identities on supervision practices in order to increase supervisee self-awareness and professional identity development, and to mentor supervisees beyond the realm of direct clinical service. For example, culturally competent supervisors may mentor supervisees in the process of developing their cultural identities and learning to advocate for themselves and others.

Daniels, D'Andrea, and Kim (1999) conducted a case study of supervision between a European American female supervisor and an Asian American male supervisee who worked as an intern at a culturally diverse high school. Based on their observations, Daniels et al. asserted that supervisors are responsible for discussing the power differential inherent in supervision. In addition, they recommended that supervisors initiate discussions regarding multicultural counseling early in supervision and demonstrate sincere interest in the supervisees' worldview and cultural background. Supervisors and supervisees were also advised to collaboratively discuss roles and responsibilities in supervision, establish guidelines for giving and receiving feedback, outline ways in which cultural misunderstandings or conflicts will be resolved, and

discuss the impact of the potential manifestation of unintentional racism and ethnocentrism in counseling or supervision.

The findings of the studies on supervisor competence highlight the necessity of increased multicultural training for supervisors and provide suggestions for improved supervisory practices. While these studies are informative, they also have numerous limitations. First, several researchers who investigated supervisor competence (Duan & Roehlke, 2001; Estrada, 2005; Hird et al., 2005; Inman, 2006) used multicultural competence assessments with limited psychometric data to support their reliability and validity. Secondly, with the exception of a few studies (i.e., Ancis & Marshall, in press; Gatmon et al., 2001; Nelson et al., 2006; Taylor et al., 2006), the research on supervisor competence focuses solely on competence in working with a supervisee or client from a different racial and ethnic background, while ignoring other cultural variables. Finally, studies that have addressed the relationship between race and supervisor competence have conceptualized race as a demographic variable and have not explored the complex reasons of how and why race influences the multicultural supervision process.

#### *Supervisors' and Supervisees' Experiences in Multicultural Supervision*

Several studies have investigated supervisees' perceptions of positive and negative experiences in multicultural supervision and the impact that these experiences have on the supervisory relationship and supervisee development (Burkard et al., 2006; Constantine & Sue, 2007; Fukuyama, 1994; Gatmon et al., 2001; Hird, Cavalieri, Dulko, Felice, & Ho, 2001). Positive supervisory experiences identified by participants include events such as (a) exploring the impact of culture on clients' presenting concerns; (b) participating in conversations where supervisors openly solicit information about

clients' cultural background and explore cultural stigma around seeking counseling (Burkard et al.); (c) not feeling personally stereotyped or that multicultural clients were stereotyped by the supervisor; (d) perceiving supervisor confidence in the supervisee's ability to work on challenging cases where cultural issues involved; (e) receiving general support and encouragement; (f) receiving guidance on culture specific issues; and (g) being offered opportunities to work on multicultural activities, such as being asked to make a presentation in a multicultural course (Fukuyama). Supervisees also experienced supervisors' addressing White privilege and the power differential in supervisory relationships as helpful (Hird et al.). Frequently occurring, in-depth dialogues regarding cultural issues that take place in a safe atmosphere (Gatmon et al.), supervisor self-disclosure regarding personal biases and assumptions, and modeling the discussion of multicultural issues early in the supervisory process are also viewed positively by supervisees (Hird et al.).

Positive experiences in multicultural supervision are positively correlated with an overall increase in satisfaction with supervision, supervisory working alliance, positive effects for clients (Burkard et al., 2006; Gatmon et al., 2001), and supervisee self-efficacy for working with culturally diverse client populations (Fukuyama, 1994). Although supervisees may prefer to work with supervisors from the same racial and ethnic background, cultural match does not significantly predict level of supervision satisfaction or working alliance (Gatmon et al.). The supervisory format may also be an important variable related to supervisees' perceptions of supervision and development of multicultural competence. Gainor and Constantine (2002) compared in-person and web-based group supervision formats to determine which format led to greater satisfaction with

supervision and supervisee multicultural competence and found that although supervisees' multicultural case conceptualization ability increased in both in-person and web-based formats, the growth was more pronounced in in-person formats. Supervisees also reported higher levels of satisfaction with supervision after participating in the in-person supervision format.

In contrast to these affirming experiences, supervisees have also identified negative experiences in multicultural supervision, including (a) working with supervisors who overtly avoided discussing the impact of culture on client treatment by verbally suggesting that the supervisee ignore clients' cultural issues or criticizing supervisees who expressed interest in addressing cultural issues with clients and (b) working with supervisors who sent more covert messages that culture is not discussed in supervision (Burkard et al., 2006). Other negative experiences include working with supervisors who lacked cultural awareness (e.g., unaware of supervisee cultural norms, used slang around English as a second language supervisees, failed to understand the cultural pride of supervisees) or questioned supervisee abilities for working with culturally diverse clients (Fukuyama, 1994). African American supervisees working with White supervisors have reported racial microaggressions, including experiences in which supervisors invalidated racial-cultural issues, made stereotypic assumptions about African American supervisees and clients, avoided giving performance feedback to African American supervisees for fear of being viewed as racist or focused primarily on the clinical weaknesses of African American supervisees, blamed clients of color for problems stemming from oppression, and offered culturally inappropriate treatment recommendations (Constantine & Sue, 2007). In addition, African American supervisees working with White supervisors who



perceived prejudice experienced higher levels of role ambiguity and role conflict (Nilsson & Duan, 2007). International students with low levels of acculturation may also experience role-confusion in supervision (Nilsson & Anderson, 2004). It is clear that negative experiences in multicultural supervision occur more frequently for supervisees of color (Burkard et al.; Nilsson & Anderson) and often result in decreased levels of supervisory satisfaction, working alliance, counseling self-efficacy, effectiveness with clients, and increased levels of emotional distress for supervisees (Burkard et al.; Constantine & Sue; Nilsson & Anderson; Nilsson & Duan.).

Researchers in three studies have investigated both supervisee and supervisor perceptions of positive and negative multicultural supervisory experiences (i.e., Pope-Davis, Toporek, & Ortega-Villalobos, 2003; Toporek, Ortega-Villalobos, & Pope-Davis, 2004; Wieling & Marshall, 1999). Toporek et al. found that positive critical incidents in supervision (e.g., contact with cultural differences, theoretical discussions, encouragement from the supervisor, supervisor self-disclosure) resulted in supervisors and supervisees experiencing an increase in self-awareness, knowledge, skill level, and confidence level for addressing cultural issues in supervision and counseling. Negative critical incidents identified by supervisors and supervisees included conflict, negative communication between the supervisor and supervisee, and lack of supervisor intervention regarding cultural issues. Overall, supervisors defined critical events more broadly than supervisees and described events in terms of multicultural variables to a greater extent than supervisees (Toporek et al.). When asked to compare and contrast their experiences of working with people of color and White people, both supervisors and supervisees indicated that a greater potential for growth and increased self-awareness

exists in cross-racial supervisory relationships (Pope-Davis et al; Wieling & Marshall), although only 30% of participants had ever been involved in a cross-racial supervisory relationship (Wieling & Marshall).

Studies investigating supervisees' and supervisors' positive and negative experiences in multicultural supervision can inform supervisors as to what types of responses and interventions in supervision may lead to the best outcomes of all parties involved in the supervisory relationship. However, these studies have several limitations. In quantitative studies (i.e., Gatmon et al., 2001; Nilsson & Anderson, 2004), the assessment instruments used by researchers lacked psychometric data supporting their reliability and validity. In the qualitative studies (i.e., Fukuyama, 1994; Pope-Davis et al., 2003; Toporek et al., 2004; Wieling & Marshall, 1999), data were collected through mailed surveys, limiting the depth of information typically sought by qualitative researchers. Low return rates also plagued the studies that used mailed assessment instruments and surveys. Another limitation of these studies is the reliance on retrospective accounts of supervisees, some of who have not be involved in supervision for 1-2 years (Constantine & Sue, 2007) up to 12 years (Fukuyama, 1994). In addition, theses studies focused primarily on issues regarding race and ethnicity. Finally, as indicated by these studies, supervisors and supervisees may have divergent perspectives regarding events in multicultural supervision (Duan & Roehlke, 2001); therefore, studies that only investigate the experiences of supervisees may not provide a complete picture of what supervisory practices are most helpful in multicultural supervision.

*Racial Identity Development and Multicultural Supervision*

Racial identity development models have been conceptually applied to the multicultural supervisory relationship in order to predict supervision outcomes (Chang et al., 2003; Cook, 1994). Three studies have tested the theoretical assumptions asserted by racial identity development models of supervision (i.e., Bhat & Davis, 2007; Constantine, Warren, & Miville, 2005; Ladany, Brittan-Powell, & Pannu, 1997). Bhat and Davis examined counseling supervisors' assessment of racial identity development and working alliance in supervision and found that the strongest working alliance occurred in supervisory dyads in which both the supervisor and supervisee were at an advanced status of racial identity development, whereas the lowest levels of working alliance were found in supervisory dyads in which both the supervisor and supervisee were at less advanced statuses of racial identity development. Constantine et al. examined the impact of White racial identity development on supervisee multicultural counseling competence in White supervisor-White supervisee dyads and found that supervisees in progressive supervisory dyads (i.e., supervisor at a more advanced level of racial identity development than supervisee) and parallel-high supervisory dyads (i.e., both supervisor and supervisee at high levels of racial identity development) reported higher levels of multicultural counseling competence and achieved higher levels of multicultural case conceptualization ability than did supervisees in parallel-low supervisory dyads (i.e., both supervisor and supervisee at low level of racial identity development). Supervisees in regressive supervisory dyads (i.e., supervisee at a more advanced level of racial identity development than supervisor) were not significantly different than other groups with regard to multicultural competence. In a similar study, Ladany et al. investigated the

influence of supervisory racial identity interaction and racial matching on the supervisory working alliance and supervisee multicultural competence. Parallel-high dyads and progressive dyads had the highest levels of supervisory working alliance, and were most influential in development of supervisee multicultural competence. In addition, racial matching of the supervisor and supervisee did not predict supervisory working alliance; however, both supervisees of color and white supervisees perceived supervisors of color to have a greater influence on their multicultural competency development.

These studies offer empirical validation of the racial identity development models for multicultural supervision; however, they are limited in that they use assessment instruments with limited psychometric data and rely only on the self-reports of supervisees. The perspectives of supervisors could strengthen future studies on racial identity development models of supervision. Finally, the low number of regressive supervisory dyads included in these studies limits statistical power.

#### *Supervisory Multicultural Competence Assessment Instruments*

Several researchers have contributed to the multicultural supervision literature by developing assessment instruments designed to measure supervisory multicultural competence. The Feminist Supervision Scale is a self-reflective tool for supervisors that measures feminist supervision practices along four dimensions: collaborative relationships, power analysis in supervision, addressing diversity and social context, and feminist advocacy and activism (Szymanski, 2003). Other researchers have also developed measures for multicultural supervision, such as the Supervision Sensitivity Scale (Estrada, 2005), the Supervisor Multicultural Competence Inventory (Inman as cited in Inman, 2006), the Multicultural Supervision Inventory (Pope-Davis et al. as cited

in Toporek et al., 2004) and the Cross-Racial Supervision Survey (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). The assessments that have been developed to assess multicultural competence in supervision have several limitations, including social desirability, only assessing competence for working with racial and ethnic minorities and not other cultural groups, and limited psychometric data to support their reliability and validity.

#### Future Directions

There has been a significant increase in the amount of conceptual and empirical articles related to multicultural supervision since Leong and Wagner's (1994) review of the literature. Conceptual articles have provided theoretical frameworks for understanding multicultural supervision and offered practical suggestions for multicultural supervisors. In addition, researchers have explored supervisor competence, supervisors' and supervisees' perceptions of positive and negative experiences in multicultural supervision and the impact these experiences have on the supervisory relationship and outcomes, the influence of racial identity development on the supervisory relationship and outcomes, and other issues related to multicultural supervision. While these articles make a significant contribution to knowledge about multicultural supervision, there are still many areas that need to be addressed in more detail. First, although it is generally agreed that the term "multicultural" includes race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, age, spiritual orientation, and ability status, the majority of multicultural supervision literature only examines racial and ethnic variables (Bernard, 1994). Only a few empirical studies (e.g., Ancis & Marshall, in press; Gatmon et al., 2001; Granello et al., 1997; Nelson et al., 2006) have addressed cultural variables such as gender and sexual orientation. Multicultural competency training limited only to issues of race and ethnicity does not

adequately prepare counselor trainees to work with the culturally diverse populations they will encounter in practice.

In addition, future research should evaluate the utility of supervision models in fostering supervisee multicultural competence (Constantine, 2003). To date, only racial identity development models of multicultural supervision have been empirically validated (Bhat & Davis, 2007; Constantine et al., 2005; Ladany et al., 1997). Numerous suggestions for competent multicultural supervision have been offered in the literature; however, there has been no systematic investigation of the processes by which supervisors and supervisees develop competence for working with culturally diverse clients (Constantine). Most quantitative studies of multicultural supervision rely on self-report from supervisors and supervisees. Self-report is limited by social desirability bias; therefore, it is recommended that more objective measures of multicultural supervision and counseling competence be used in future research. Finally, current qualitative studies rely primarily on survey methods, which fail to provide rich understandings of participants' experiences, and often lack detailed descriptions of the research methodology and data analysis strategies employed by the researchers, which limits the trustworthiness of the data. More rigorous qualitative investigations of positive and negative experiences in multicultural supervision are needed. In particular, researchers should use data collection methods including observation of live or recorded supervision sessions and in person semi-structured interviews. Future research should include in-depth qualitative investigation of the perceptions of supervisors and supervisees regarding the impact of attention to cultural issues on the supervisory relationship and factors influencing the supervisee's level of cultural competence.

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## CHAPTER 2

### A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF SUPERVISORS' AND SUPERVISEES' EXPERIENCES WITH ATTENTION TO CULTURAL ISSUES IN MULTICULTURAL SUPERVISION

Defined as awareness of one's assumptions, biases, and worldview; knowledge of the worldviews of culturally different clients; and development and implementation of counseling skills and intervention strategies for working with culturally diverse clients (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992), multicultural counseling competency has received much attention in all areas of counseling with the exception of clinical supervision (Constantine, 2003). The importance of attention to multicultural competence in supervision is twofold. First, the supervisory relationship is integral in fostering the professional and skill development of a supervisee (Bernard & Goodyear, 2003). A critical component in this process is nurturing the supervisee's development of multicultural counseling competency. Secondly, nearly all supervisory triads (i.e., supervisor, supervisee, and client) can be characterized as multicultural; therefore, it is critical that supervisors competently address multicultural issues in supervision. For the purposes of this article, multicultural supervision is defined as a complex triadic relationship among a supervisor, supervisee, and client that involves the intersection of diverse cultural backgrounds in the relationship (Chang, Hays, & Shoffner, 2003; McLeod & Chang, in press).

Leong and Wagner (1994) reviewed empirical literature related to multicultural supervision and found only three empirical articles that addressed multicultural issues in counseling supervision (Cook & Helms, 1988; Hilton, Russell, & Salmi, 1995 [in press at the time that Leong and Wagner's critique was published]; Vander Kolk, 1974).

Although researchers have devoted increased attention to multicultural issues in supervision since 1994, the literature is still scant in comparison to the bodies of information available on multicultural issues in other areas of counseling (Constantine, 2003). To date, 24 empirical journal articles on multicultural supervision have been published. In addition, 12 conceptual articles and 12 conceptual book chapters have addressed the topic of multicultural supervision since 1994.

Counseling researchers have investigated the relationship between multicultural competence and clinical supervision within several areas, albeit minimally. These empirical articles can be grouped into three main categories: (a) research investigating supervisor multicultural competence, the impact of supervisor multicultural competence on the supervisory relationships and outcomes, and the potentially mediating role of race, racial matching, and racial identity; (b) research presenting supervisees' perceptions of positive and negative experiences regarding cultural issues in supervision and the impact of these experiences on the supervisory relationships and outcomes, and (c) research presenting both supervisors' and supervisees' perceptions of critical events in supervision and the impact of these incidents on the supervisory relationships and outcomes.

With regard to supervisors' multicultural competence, research indicates that approximately 70% of supervisors have never had a course in multicultural counseling, while 70% of supervisees have completed a multicultural counseling course (Constantine,



1997). In addition, though cultural discussions are a critical component of competent multicultural supervision, they occur at a low frequency (Gatmon et al., 2001).

Reportedly only 15% of time in supervision is spent discussing multicultural issues (Constantine), and supervisors typically report making more of an attempt to address cultural issues in supervision than is perceived by supervisees (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). These findings suggest that supervisor multicultural training appears to be one of the factors related to supervisor multicultural competence.

Through a qualitative analysis of supervisees' perceptions of multiculturally competent supervisory practices, Ancis and Marshall (in press) have identified factors related to supervisory multicultural competence. Themes related to perceptions of supervisor multicultural competence can be categorized according to the five domains of the Multicultural Supervision Competencies (Ancis & Ladany, 2001): (a) supervisor and supervisee focused personal development (e.g., demonstrates limits of multicultural knowledge, proactively introduces multicultural issues, uses self-disclosure, demonstrates and encourages cultural awareness); (b) client conceptualization (e.g., encourages examination of supervisees' assumption and biases, encourages exploration of clients' worldviews); (c) skills and interventions (encourages collaborative goal setting with clients, encourages supervisee facilitation of client awareness of social issues); (d) process (conveys acceptance of cultural diversity in supervisory relationships, acknowledges power differentials, and creates a safe supervisory environment); and (e) outcome/evaluation (identifies supervisees' strengths and weaknesses regarding multicultural competency, supervisory practices related to positive client outcomes).

The supervisor's race, racial matching between the supervisor and supervisee, and the intersections of the racial identity development statuses of the supervisor and supervisee may also be related to how attention is given to cultural in supervision and perceptions of supervisor multicultural competence. Researchers have indicated that racial and ethnic minority supervisors report higher levels of multicultural competence and report spending more time addressing cultural issues in supervision than White supervisors (Hird, Tao, & Gloria, 2005). Additionally, African American supervisors may be more likely to encourage supervisees' exploration of the worldviews of culturally diverse clients and explore the supervisees' use of culturally appropriate intervention strategies more frequently than White supervisors (Estrada, 2005). Supervisees often perceive working with a supervisor from a racial background different from their own to be a more positive and growth producing experience than working with a racially similar supervisor (Pope-Davis, Toporek, & Ortega-Villalobos, 2003; Wieling & Marshall, 1999).

According to racial identity development models for multicultural supervision, supervisory outcomes are influenced by the interaction of the supervisor's and supervisee's levels of racial identity development. Supervisory relationships in which the supervisor is at a higher level of racial identity development than the supervisee (i.e., progressive relationships) or in which both the supervisor and supervisee are at high levels of development (i.e., parallel-high relationships) lead to higher levels of supervisee multicultural competency and a strong supervisory working alliance (Constantine, Warren, & Miville, 2005; Ladany, Brittan-Powell, & Pannu, 1997).

The second area of multicultural supervision research involves assessing supervisees' perceptions of positive and negative experiences regarding cultural issues in supervision and the impact of these experiences on supervisory processes and outcomes. Supervisees have described positive critical incidents in supervision, including working with supervisors who demonstrate openness and support, provide culturally relevant supervision, and provide opportunities to engage in multicultural activities (Fukuyama 1994), as well as supervisors who explore the impact of culture on the client's presenting concerns, openly solicit information about clients' cultural backgrounds, and explore stigma regarding seeking counseling in the client's culture (Burkard et al., 2006). Positive experiences in multicultural supervision are positively correlated with an overall increase in satisfaction with supervision, supervisory working alliance, effectiveness with clients (Burkard et al.), and supervisee self-efficacy for working with culturally diverse client populations (Fukuyama).

Negative critical incidents in supervision reported by supervisees include working with supervisors who lack cultural awareness, question supervisees' abilities (Fukuyama, 1994), avoid discussing the impact of culture on client treatment, send covert messages that culture should not be discussed in supervision, overtly suggest that trainees ignore cultural issues, describe culturally diverse clients as crazy, or criticize supervisees for wanting to address cultural issues with clients (Burkard et al., 2006). Constantine and Sue (2007) investigated the perceptions of racial microaggressions, a specific type of negative experience among African American supervisees who are supervised by White supervisors. Negative experiences reported by participants in this study included working with supervisors who invalidate racial and cultural issues, make stereotypic assumptions about

African American clients and supervisees, are reluctant to give performance feedback to African American supervisees for fear of being viewed as racist, focus primarily on the clinical weaknesses of African American supervisees, blame clients of color for problems stemming from oppression, and offer culturally insensitive treatment recommendations. Negative experiences in supervision may have detrimental consequences for both White supervisees and supervisees of color including a negative impact on the supervisory relationship, a decreased level of satisfaction with supervision, more significantly so for supervisees of color; and decreased effectiveness with clients (Burkard et al.; Constantine & Sue).

The third area of investigation in the multicultural supervision literature, which includes only one qualitative study (i.e., Toporek, Ortega-Villalobos, & Pope-Davis, 2004), addresses the perceptions of both supervisors and supervisees regarding positive and negative critical events in multicultural supervision. This study is important because counseling supervisors and supervisees may have divergent perspectives on how cultural issues are addressed in supervision (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). Toporek et al. found that supervisors defined critical incidents more broadly and focused on the interpersonal nature of the supervisory relationship more than supervisees. Although the majority of supervisors and supervisees who worked together reported different critical incidents, the outcomes of the critical incidents they reported were similar and included changes in personal awareness of how culture impacts counseling and supervision, increased multicultural skill development, changes in knowledge regarding multicultural competency, initial exposure to multicultural situations, changes in confidence in one's ability to

address cultural issues in supervision and counseling, the recognition of the need for additional training, and negative influences.

The available literature on supervisors' and supervisees' experiences and perceptions in multicultural supervision provide important insights regarding factors that contribute to competent multicultural supervision, the types of supervisory interventions perceived as multiculturally competent, and the types of supervisory experiences that positively and negatively influence supervisory relationships and outcomes. However, the existent literature also has notable limitations. One of the primary limitations of most of the existing studies on multicultural supervision is the singular focus on demographic variables, such as race, while neglecting the exploration of the process of multicultural supervision. In addition, several qualitative studies (Fukuyama, 1994; Toporek et al., 2004) relied on mailed questionnaires. Typically, questionnaires are unable to reveal the depth of participants' experiences or provide the rich textual descriptions typically sought after by qualitative researchers (Creswell, 2006). In addition, several studies relied on participants' extended retrospective accounts of supervision. In some studies participants were asked to recall supervisory experiences although they had not been involved in supervision for time periods ranging from 1-2 years (Constantine & Sue, 2007) up to 12 years (Fukuyama, 1994). Studies that only included the perspectives of either supervisors or supervisees are limited because supervisors and supervisees may perceive efforts at addressing cultural issues in supervision differently (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). Finally, although it is generally agreed that multicultural supervision encompasses cultural identities including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, spiritual identity, age, ability

status, and socioeconomic status; the majority of multicultural supervision research has focused solely on issues of race and ethnicity (Bernard & Goodyear, 2003).

This study makes a significant contribution to the multicultural supervision literature by addressing the limitations associated with previous studies. In contrast to studies that used mailed questionnaires or focused on demographic variables, such as race, while neglecting the exploration of the process of multicultural supervision, in this study I sought to provide thick descriptions of the lived experiences of a small sample of supervisors and supervisees regarding the impact of attention to cultural issues on the supervisory relationship and supervisee development of multicultural counseling competence. I used a phenomenological research tradition, which is appropriate given that the existent literature lacks in depth data on the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2006; Grbich, 2007). Data collection and analysis were approached with a multicultural lens (e.g., asking direct interview questions, trusting participants to give honest responses, less interpretive/expert researcher role). In contrast to researchers who defined culture narrowly to include only race and ethnicity, I defined culture broadly to include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, spiritual identity, age, ability status, and socioeconomic status. To avoid limitations associated with extended retrospective participant accounts, participants in this study were currently involved in multicultural supervision, either as a supervisor or supervisee, at the time data collection took place. Finally, to provide the most complete picture of experiences in supervision, I explored the following research questions from both the supervisor's and supervisee's perspective:

1. How are cultural issues addressed in supervision?

2. How do positive and negative experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision impact the supervisory relationship?
3. How do supervisors and supervisees conceptualize the development of supervisee multicultural counseling competence?

The first research question solicits information about how attention is given to cultural issues in supervision and ultimately speaks to supervisor multicultural competence.

Supervisor multicultural competence is critically important because nearly all supervisory relationships can be categorized as multicultural when culture is defined broadly. In addition, supervisors' multicultural competence is of importance because the supervisory experience is integral in fostering the supervisees' development of multicultural competence. The second and third research questions build on data from previous studies (e.g., Burkard et al., 2006; Constantine & Sue, 2007; Fukuyama, 1994; Toporek et al., 2004) that have investigated the relationship among positive and negative experiences regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision and supervisory relationships and supervisee development of multicultural competence. Examining the impact of positive and negative experiences with attention to cultural issues on the supervisory relationship is critical because a positive supervisory relationship is a precursor to supervisee risk taking and growth in supervision (Inman, 2006). Finally, the third research question, which investigates supervisors' and supervisees' conceptualizations of supervisee development multicultural counseling competence has important training implications.

## Method

### *Research Team*

At the time of the study, I, the primary researcher, was a 28 year old, White woman who identified as heterosexual and Christian. The second member of the research team identified as a 30-year old, African American, heterosexual, Catholic woman. Both researchers were third-year doctoral students in a counselor education program at a large, urban university. The third member of the research team was 35 years old, and he identified as a deeply spiritual, heterosexual, White man who is an assistant professor at the same university. All three researchers were licensed professional counselors in a southeastern U.S. state, and all had completed coursework and attended numerous workshops related to multicultural counseling competency. Both female researchers had taken a didactic course in counselor supervision and had completed a year-long supervised-supervision internship. At the time of the study, I had one year of experience providing supervision to five interns who were working towards master's degrees in counseling. The other female researcher supervised a school counseling intern while she was working as a school counselor, before pursuing her doctoral degree. The male member of the research team completed approximately 12 credit hours of formal coursework in supervision training, and he had attended numerous workshops and presentations on counselor supervision. In addition, he had completed 2 years of supervised-supervision training and had over 4 years of experience providing counselor supervision.

With regard to biases, all researchers acknowledged actively addressing cultural issues when they serve as counseling supervisors. They expected that constructive



attention to cultural issues would benefit the supervisory relationship and the supervisee's level of multicultural competence. The researchers expected that supervisors and supervisees would perceive attention to cultural issues in supervision differently. In addition, they expected that supervisors of color and female supervisors might be more attentive to cultural issues in supervision than White or male supervisors. These biases are based on personal experiences and findings in the multicultural supervision literature.

### *Participants*

Through convenience and maximum variation sampling (Patton, 2002), the researchers recruited 15 participants--six supervisors and nine supervisees. Given that generalizability is not a goal of phenomenological research, the sample of 15 participants was appropriate (Moustakas, 1994). Maximum variation sampling, which is a form of purposeful sampling, seeks to identify common and variant patterns that emerge from a heterogeneous sample. Although heterogeneity in a small sample can be viewed as a limitation, the maximum variation sampling strategy considers the themes that emerge from a diverse sample to be particularly characteristic of the essence of an experience (Patton). For the purposes of this study, the researchers sought participants who represented diversity in race and ethnicity, gender, age, sexual identity, religious/spiritual identity, ability status, and socioeconomic status. Of the supervisors who participated in this study, four identified as Caucasian and two identify as African American; four were female and two were male. The ages of supervisors in this study ranged from 33-55 years ( $M = 43$  years). Five supervisors identified as heterosexual, and one identified as homosexual. Four of the supervisors identified their spiritual or religious identity as Christian, one identified as Buddhist, and one did not identify religiously or spiritually.

One of the supervisors in this study identified as a person with a disability. The annual incomes of supervisors range from \$20,000-\$40,000 to \$80,000-\$100,000, with an average annual income of \$60,000-\$80,000.

Of the supervisees who participated in this study, five identified as Caucasian, three identified as African American, and one identified as multiracial; eight identified as female and one identified as male. The ages of the supervisees ranged from 24-40 years ( $M = 28$  years). Eight supervisees identify as heterosexual, and one identified as homosexual. Six of the supervisees identified their spiritual or religious identity as Christian, one identified as Jewish, one identified as Christian and Jewish, and one identified as an Animist. None of the supervisees identified as persons with disabilities. The annual incomes of supervisees ranged from below \$20,000 to over \$100,000 dollars, with an average annual income of \$40,000-\$60,000.

To add another dimension of diversity to the sample, the researchers sought participants with diverse professional backgrounds. Of the supervisors who participated in this study, five had backgrounds in mental health and substance abuse counseling and one had a background in school counseling. The post-master's counseling experience of the supervisors ranges from 6-23 years ( $M = 12$  years) of experience. Four of the supervisors served as the university supervisors for practicum and internship students, one supervisor provided on-site supervision for practicum and internship students and post-master's counselors working towards licensure, and one supervisor provided both university and on-site supervision. With regard to education and training, three of the supervisors had doctorates, one had a specialist's degree, and two had master's-level degrees. The three supervisors who did not have doctorates were enrolled in a doctoral

counseling program. Four of the six supervisors reported having completed at least one course on multicultural counseling; all supervisors reported attending at least one workshop on multicultural counseling. Five of the six supervisors had completed coursework on supervision, three of the six had attended a workshop on supervision, and four of the six had completed a supervised-supervision internship.

The professional experiences of the supervisees were also diverse in nature. Five supervisees worked or interned at hospital-based mental health and substance abuse settings, two interned at a university counseling center, one interned in a school setting, and one interned at an outpatient mental health and substance abuse practice. With regard to education and training, one supervisee had a specialist's degree, two supervisees had master's-level degrees, and five had bachelor's degrees. The supervisees with specialist's and master's degrees were enrolled in a doctoral counseling program or an add-on certification program. All supervisees with bachelor's degrees were enrolled in a master's-level counseling program. In one supervisor-supervisee dyad, the supervisee had completed a higher level counseling degree than the supervisor. All of the supervisees in this study reported having completed at least one course on multicultural counseling; however, only four of the nine supervisees had attended a workshop on multicultural counseling. Only one supervisee had completed coursework on supervision, attended workshops on supervision, and completed a supervised-supervision internship.

All supervisors in this study identified professionally as counselors, and they were providing supervision to a minimum of five master's practicum and internship students and/or post-master's counselors working towards licensure at the time the study took place. The minimum number of supervisees required for participation provides an

additional measure of confidentiality for supervisees. All supervisees who participated in this study were receiving supervision from one of the participating supervisors at the time this study took place. Additionally, all supervisees differed from their supervisor on at least one of the following cultural dimensions: race/ethnicity, gender, age, sexual identity, religious/spiritual identity, or socioeconomic status. The criteria for cultural diversity between supervisors and supervisees was designed to ensure that all participants could be categorized as involved in multicultural supervision, defined as a complex triadic relationship between a supervisor, supervisee, and client that involves the intersection of diverse cultural backgrounds in the relationship (Chang, Hays, & Shoffner, 2003; McLeod & Chang, in press).

### *Procedures*

Participants were recruited from a large, urban research university and a mental health and substance abuse hospital in the southeastern United States. I invited supervisors with whom I had prolonged engagement to participate in this study. To protect the confidentiality of the supervisees, I recruited only supervisors with a minimum of five supervisees for this study. Supervisors who agreed to participate in this study were asked to provide a list of their current supervisees. I contacted the supervisees through email and provided information on this study, including the title of the study, a general purpose statement, and a copy of the informed consent form. To be included in the study, at least one supervisee per supervisor must have agreed to take part in this research. If more than two supervisees per supervisor agreed to participate, the researchers planned to select randomly a maximum of two supervisees per supervisor for inclusion in this study; however, random selection was not necessary because no more than two supervisees per

supervisor agreed to participation. The supervisors were not informed as to which supervisees took part in the study. I arranged to meet each participant in person in order to conduct a semi-structured interview and collect demographic information.

Data collection involved my conducting individual, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with each supervisor and one or two of their supervisees. Before each interview, I read the informed consent form (Appendix D) aloud to each participant and asked the participant to verify understanding of participants' rights in the study. Each participant signed and returned one copy of the informed consent form to me, and I gave each one copy of the informed consent form to keep. The order of interviewing was as follows: A supervisor was interviewed, and then the supervisee(s) that worked with that supervisor were interviewed individually. The interviews of one supervisor and the supervisee(s) who work with the supervisor were considered a set of interviews. Three sets of interviews include an interview with a supervisor and one supervisee. In these data sets, only one supervisee working with a particular supervisor agreed to participate in the study. Three sets of interviews include interviews with a supervisor and two supervisees. Data from the first set of interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed before the next set of interviews with a supervisor and their supervisee(s) took place. This process was repeated with each set of participants until all participants had been interviewed. In other words, data collection and analysis took place simultaneously, allowing the interview protocols and research questions to evolve and reflect emerging themes (Creswell, 2006). Following each interview, the participants were asked to complete the participant demographic information sheet (Appendix C). All participants received a \$10 gift card, given as a token of appreciation, after data collection was complete.

### *Data Sources*

*Semi-structured interview.* I conducted a face-to-face, semi-structured interview with each participant individually. The semi-structured interviews ranged from 30-60 minutes each. I used an interview protocol to guide each interview. Separate interview protocols were used for supervisors (Appendix A) and supervisees (Appendix B). Probing questions were used for clarification or to elicit elaboration of responses. Interviews were audiotaped for the purpose of preserving the participants' exact words for transcription and later analysis. Because this is a phenomenological study using recursive methodology, research and interview questions evolved to reflect insights obtained from previous data collections and analyses.

*Participant demographic information sheet.* Following the semi-structured interview, participants were asked to complete a participant demographic information sheet (Appendix C). The demographic sheet took approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. No personal identifying information was recorded on the demographic sheet.

### *Data Analysis*

Step one of data analysis involved bracketing of the researchers' biases and assumptions. The research team met and discussed their preconceptions regarding the role of attention to cultural issues in supervision and then attempted to set aside these ideas in order to allow space for participants' experiences to emerge. Biases identified by the researchers included personally making active attempts to address cultural issues when serving as counseling supervisors, the expectation that constructive attention to cultural issues will benefit the supervisory relationship and the supervisee's level of multicultural competence, the expectation that supervisors and supervisees will perceive

attention to cultural issues in supervision differently, and the expectation that supervisors of color and female supervisors may be more attentive to cultural issues in supervision than White or male supervisors. The research team continuously monitored their biases and assumptions throughout the data collection and analysis process by meeting for regularly scheduled debriefing sessions held in conjunction with data analysis meetings. In addition, I kept a reflexive journal to monitor my biases and assumptions throughout the data collection and analysis process.

Step two of data analysis involved horizontalization of the data, or independent, open coding by the three members of the research team. Before analysis, the audiotapes of the interviews were transcribed, and any identifiable personal information was removed from the transcriptions. After coding the transcripts independently, the research team engaged in step three of data analysis--meeting to compare codes and reach consensus on codes. Step four of data analysis involved the development of an initial codebook based on the first two sets of coded interviews. Step five of data analysis involved recoding the first two sets of interviews according to the codebook. Because data collection and data analysis occurred simultaneously during this study, new codes emerged. The codebook was modified after each set of interviews to reflect the new codes. After each set of data was collected, the research team members coded the interviews independently, according to the codebook. They met and reached consensus on the codes for each set of interviews. After all sets of interviews were coded and the codebook reached its final version, all sets of interviews were recoded according to the final version of the codebook. Finally, the research team met and reached consensus on how to collapse the codes into clusters of meaning or themes and compared and

contrasted the themes expressed by the supervisors and supervisees. Throughout the study, the researchers kept an audit trail. After all data were collected and analyzed, an outside auditor reviewed the findings and conclusions of the researchers to ensure they were supported by the data. The auditor for this study was a southern Asian female university faculty member who had knowledge regarding the topic of multicultural supervision and the design of the study but who otherwise remained disconnected from the process of data collection and analysis, had no additional comments or suggestions for changes.

### *Verification Procedures*

The research design included numerous verification procedures designed to enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of this study (Creswell, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, I had prolonged engagement with all of the supervisors and seven of the nine supervisees who participated in this study. In addition, the research design includes triangulation of researchers (i.e., three person research team) and triangulation of participants (i.e., supervisors and supervisees). Data collection and analysis took place simultaneously, allowing emerging themes to inform subsequent data collections. Also, the research team engaged in negative case analysis and refined their working hypotheses based on interviews that provided disconfirming evidence of previously held ideas. The biases of the research team were monitored in a bracketing meeting, regularly scheduled debriefing meetings held in conjunction with data analysis meetings, and the primary researcher's reflexive journal. The researchers kept an audit trail and at the completion of data collection and analysis, an external auditor reviewed the audit trail to ensure the researchers findings and conclusions are supported by the



data. Finally, the researchers provide thick, rich descriptions and participant quotations to meet the standard of transferability and provide readers with sufficient information to determine if data presented in this study could be generalized to the reader's sample of interest.

## Results

Participants' responses are organized according to the three research questions that guided this study:

1. How are cultural issues addressed in supervision?
2. How do positive and negative experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision impact the supervisory relationship?
3. How do supervisors and supervisees conceptualize the development of supervisee multicultural counseling competence?

There is no order of priority to the themes and not all themes were expressed by all participants. Subthemes are described under each major theme. Themes are not mutually exclusive (i.e., one participant may express several themes related to each research question) and themes may overlap to some degree. Notable discrepancies in the responses of supervisors and supervisees are reported under each major theme.

### *How are cultural issues addressed in supervision?*

In response to the first research question, participants described how cultural issues are addressed in supervision (see Table 1). Five major themes emerged including frequency, responsibility for initiation of cultural discussion, supervisor's role in addressing cultural issues, degree of intentionality, and scope of attention to culture. Participants' positive and negative experiences regarding attention to cultural issues in

Table 1

*Major Themes Associated with Research Question One*


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 Research Question One: How are cultural issues addressed in supervision?
 

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 Description of attention to cultural issues
 

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Frequency

Responsibility for initiation of cultural discussions

Supervisor's role in addressing cultural issues

Degree of intentionality

Scope of attention to culture

Positive experiences regarding attention to cultural issues

Supervisor role

Cultural similarities as positive

Consideration of cultural context

Receiving helpful feedback

Making invisible cultural differences visible

Empowerment

No positive experiences

Negative experiences regarding attention to cultural issues

Discomfort

Lack of balance

Being judged

Pushing an agenda

Cultural discussions silenced

supervision also are responsive to the first research question. Major themes associated with positive experiences in multicultural supervision include supervisor role, cultural similarities as positive, consideration of cultural context, receiving helpful feedback, making invisible cultural differences visible, and empowerment. It should be noted that two supervisees did not report any positive experiences in multicultural supervision.

Major themes associated with negative experiences in multicultural supervision include discomfort, lack of balance, being judged, pushing an agenda, and cultural discussions silenced.

#### *Attention to Cultural Issues in Supervision*

*Frequency.* The theme, frequency, refers to how often cultural issues are addressed in supervision. Participants in this study reported frequencies ranging from giving attention to cultural issues every supervision session to very rarely addressing cultural issues in supervision (e.g., 1% of time in supervision spent discussing cultural issues). Two sets of participants reported that attention was devoted to cultural issues in every supervisory session, one set of participants reported moderate frequency of attention to cultural issues, and one set of participants reported that culturally issues were very rarely, if ever, addressed in supervision. In the other two sets of participants, supervisors reported addressing cultural issues in supervision at a higher frequency than was perceived by supervisees. For example, the supervisor stated, “I feel like culture is always in the middle of what we do because I feel like we talk about it all the time.” In contrast the supervisees who worked with this supervisor reported that attention was given to cultural issues, “like once every four weeks” and “15-25% of time” overall in supervision.

*Responsibility for initiation of cultural discussions.* Participants indicated that the primary responsibility for initiating cultural discussions in supervision belonged to the supervisor, the supervisee (s), or they indicated that the responsibility for initiating cultural discussions is shared by the supervisors and supervisees. Two sets of participants reported that the supervisor primarily initiates discussions of cultural issues. The other four sets of supervisors and supervisees had divergent perspectives regarding the initiation of cultural discussions. Three supervisors reported that they primarily initiated cultural discussions; however the supervisees who work with these supervisors reported that cultural discussions were primarily initiated by supervisees or that the supervisor and supervisee shared the responsibility for initiating cultural discussions. One supervisor reported that the supervisor and the supervisees shared the responsibility for initiating cultural discussions; however, the supervisee who works with this supervisor perceived the supervisor as primarily initiating cultural discussions.

*Supervisor's role in addressing cultural issues.* Supervisors and supervisees described the role the supervisor plays in addressing cultural issues in their supervision experience including (a) the supervisor's use of appropriate self-disclosure regarding cultural identity or experiences working with culturally diverse clients, (b) modeling the discussion and consideration of cultural issues related to client work, (c) challenging supervisees to consider cultural issues, (d) supervisor self-awareness regarding how the supervisor's cultural identity may influence the supervisory relationships and process, (e) encouragement of supervisee self-exploration, (f) attending to the group process for cues as to when discussions of cultural issues are salient, (g) encouraging culturally diverse supervisees to seek support from within their cultural group (e.g., receiving

guidance from a spiritual or religious advisor about a personal issue impacting counseling), and (h) supervisors seeking personal supervision regarding how to best address cultural issues in supervision.

*Degree of intentionality.* The theme, degree of intentionality, refers to the supervisor's level of deliberateness or purposefulness in addressing cultural issues in supervision. Supervisors with a high degree of intentionality used planned multicultural activities, addressed cultural issues early in the supervisory relationship, addressed cultural issues directly (e.g., use the word "culture"), provided a rationale for addressing cultural issues, and checked-in with supervisees or asked questions about cultural issues in relation to client work. In contrast, supervisors with a low degree of intentionality viewed attention to cultural issues as less of a priority. Supervisors with a low degree of intentionality addressed cultural issues spontaneously (e.g., when culture presented a problem, when supervisees initiated cultural discussions, when cultural issues came up during case presentations), addressed cultural issues indirectly (e.g., discussed client background without using the word 'culture'), or did not address cultural issues at all resulting in the perpetuation of cultural stereotypes and biases. For example, a supervisee who reported that the supervisee and the supervisor did not discuss their cultural identities with each other described the basis for the supervisee's perceptions of the supervisor:

I think I just assumed . . . There are certain things that I just assume when I come to a supervisor who is male, who is Caucasian, um, it might not be right to do that but I already have my own type of assumptions that he is going to act a certain way or be a certain way.

*Scope of attention to culture.* The theme, scope of attention to culture, describes whether cultural issues were addressed in relation to supervisory and counseling

relationships and processes, in relation to client background, or separately from supervisory and counseling relationships and processes. One supervisor described how culture was addressed in relation to supervisory and counseling relationships and processes:

. . . Recognizing that there are cultural differences in everyone, every person that we work with, and taking that into account when I am providing supervision . . . bringing that stuff that everybody is very aware of but nobody talks about right into the middle of the floor and working through and helping them use that as a model to work with their clients.

Another supervisor provided an example of discussing cultural issues in relation to client background. Following a supervisee's case presentation on an Asian American female diagnosed with schizophrenia, the supervisor initiated a cultural discussion. The supervisor stated, "I thought that there was something, that there needed to be some discussion about her cultural background and how that might be impacting her ways of seeking help and support."

Scope of attention to culture also describes if culture was addressed holistically (i.e., complete and integrative view of an individual) or one-dimensionally (i.e., focus on a single aspect of one's cultural identity). For example, one supervisee described the supervisor's one-dimensional cultural focus, "It's kind of like when somebody is so focused on the individual letters that they are not seeing the entire word or the sentences."

#### *Positive Experiences Regarding Attention to Cultural Issues in Supervision*

*Supervisor role.* The theme, supervisor role, refers to positive experiences in supervision because of the supervisor's use of self-disclosure, the supervisor's experience with the supervisee's client population, or the supervisor's encouragement of cultural discussions. One supervisee provided a description of how a supervisor encouraged the discussion of cultural issues in supervision: "[The supervisor] brings in the multicultural

part. [The supervisor] is always pushing and talking about multicultural theory and our multicultural issues.” A third of supervisees reported positive experiences related to the supervisor’s role in attending to cultural issues in supervision; however, only one supervisor expressed this theme.

*Cultural similarities as positive.* Two supervisors described experiences that fall under this theme. An African American female supervisor described strong cultural identification with an African American female supervisee who felt marginalized at her internship site because of her race. The supervisor was very invested in processing the supervisee’s feelings and stated, “I think that has been one of the most positive experiences for me because I was able to be myself and I think I helped her to find her voice because I have been where she is.” A Caucasian female supervisor described feeling relieved that a Latina female supervisee who grew up in a predominantly middle-class Caucasian neighborhood did not perceive having a Caucasian supervisor as negative. This supervisor also reported that in general, the cultural homogeneity of the group was positive. No supervisees expressed this theme.

*Consideration of cultural context.* The theme, consideration of cultural context, was expressed by supervisors and supervisees and refers to the positive experiences of reframing client issues from a cultural perspective or taking a supervisee’s cultural context into consideration when evaluating the supervisee’s performance. One supervisor described encouraging a supervisee to reframe a client behavior from a cultural perspective instead of considering the behavior pathological. This supervisor described encouraging her supervisee to say to a client:

Cursing somebody out in the streets before was really helpful because you got respect, nobody messed with you, and you could go on your way,

whatever. But in treatment and in looking for a job . . . cursing somebody out is not going to be so helpful so let's find other ways . . .

Another supervisor described the positive experience of discussing how a supervisee's cultural context influenced her comfort level in working with male clients. This supervisor stated,

I basically let her know that I understood it was something that was not comfortable for her. We actually did talk a little bit about how men and women relate in her homeland . . . I had to be sensitive and I let her guide, you know, how fast she wanted to work on it.

*Receiving helpful feedback.* The theme, receiving helpful feedback, was the most commonly identified positive experience regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision reported by supervisees. Receiving helpful feedback could take the form of suggestions for improving counseling with culturally diverse clients, having attention called to blind spots in work with culturally diverse clients, or learning about additional resources for working with culturally diverse clients. For example, one supervisee described receiving helpful feedback from supervision group members regarding how to more effectively engage the parents of Latino and Latina students at the school where the supervisee interned as a school counselor. No supervisors reported this theme.

*Making invisible cultural differences visible.* The theme, making invisible cultural differences visible, refers to learning about aspects of the supervisors' and supervisees' cultural identities that were not readily apparent. Both supervisors and supervisees reported this theme and expressed that making invisible cultural differences visible lead to a reduction in stereotypes and biases. This positive experience often occurred as a result of discussing the cultural identities of the supervisor and supervision group members early in the supervisory relationship. For example, one supervisor described



how an activity that involved supervisees describing their cultural identities during the first group supervision session was a positive experience:

It was a reminder to me not to assume things about people, not just to go down racial lines and say this culture is this way and this culture is this way. . . . So I think that activity just generally gave people the opportunity to say to the group who they are and right from the beginning that matters.

*Empowerment.* The theme, empowerment, describes positive experiences including a passion for a client population, encouragement to find one's voice, feeling supported by peers (i.e., the supervisees in the supervision group), and feeling as though one was making a contribution in supervision. This theme was primarily reported by supervisors; one supervisee reported this theme. The supervisee described feeling like she made a significant contribution in supervision by bringing an important and diverse perspective as the only African American female in the group. A supervisor described the positive experiences of passion for a client population and empowerment when encouraging an African American female supervisee to trust herself in her counseling work with African American female clients. The supervisor reported telling the supervisee:

I'm African and that's the population that I want to work with and somebody helped me to see like there is a voice out there missing about how to work with these women and you could add that. Like, *you* could help, *you* could do that!

The supervisor then described feelings of contribution related to the same incident:

And also, I was able to feel good about kind of that I was giving back, because someone had given me that and I was like, "Oh my gosh, I can? It's okay? Like, I can really think about what I want to do and try it?" And I think I did that for her, and so that was just powerful for me.

*Negative Experiences Regarding Attention to Cultural Issues in Supervision*

*Discomfort.* The theme, discomfort, refers to experiences during which the supervisor or supervisee felt attacked, offended, anxious, or embarrassed because of the manner in which cultural issues were addressed in supervision. For example, one supervisor described feeling anxious about bringing up how a supervisee's cultural norms were negatively affecting her work with male clients. Another supervisor described the negative experience of giving a supervisee feedback on a cultural issue that the supervisee interpreted as too personal and offensive:

I wonder if it felt too personal or maybe that was too overt or whatever because [the supervisee] already had a lot of stress, or whatever. So I think that can be a danger, um, if all the variables, I don't know, talking about things that are so close to home.

*Lack of balance.* The theme, lack of balance, refers to negative experiences due to an over focus on cultural issues in supervision or too little attention or insufficient depth in attention to cultural issues in supervision. For example, one supervisee described an over-focus on the cultural identities of supervision group members and a lack of attention to clients' cultural backgrounds. Another supervisee described a negative experience related to an over-focus on culture in which a supervision group member attributed difficulty at an internship site to cultural issues, when in fact, the difficulties were due to other factors. This supervisee stated,

And [the supervision group member] was presenting the whole problem with the internship site and being asked to leave as 100% founded in a multicultural conflict and kind of um, a race issue. And [the supervision group member] was you know, talking to the whole group about it and really emphasizing that you know, we [other member of the supervision group] are all multiculturally aware, sensitive counselors and we were like, "Oh my gosh! That's horrible!" . . . And then found out that it was a whole bunch of other things that influenced it. So that was a huge deal . . .

Three supervisors and two supervisees reported the theme, lack of balance.

*Being judged.* The theme, being judged, was reported by three supervisors and six supervisees and referred to negative experiences including judgmental attitudes, the fear of being stereotyped or feeling stereotyped, feeling accused or mistrusted by the supervisor, feeling devalued as a supervisor, and feeling misunderstood in supervision. For example, one supervisor described the negative experience of a supervisee expressing beliefs that the supervisor perceived as judgmental:

[the supervisee] I think has some views, possibly judgmental views, about being married or not in terms of what is right and what you should be if you are together and you are intimate and you are going to have children then you should be married. . . . I would say that in some cases it may interfere with her ability to be the best counselor for a given situation.

Another example was provided by an African American female supervisor who reported feeling stereotyped and devalued by a Caucasian male supervisee who only sought her guidance when he needed help with difficult African American clients.

*Pushing an agenda.* The theme, pushing an agenda, was only discussed by three supervisees. Supervisees reported negative experiences when they perceived attention to cultural issues as either the supervisor or another supervisee in the group pushing a personal agenda. For example, one supervisee who identified as a Christian reported that the supervisor provided corrective feedback about how to introduce the topic of Christianity in session with clients. The supervisee felt the supervisor's feedback was due to the supervisor's aversion to Christianity rather than concern for the supervisee or the supervisee's clients. The supervisee stated, "I felt like it was more [the supervisor] with the problem than . . . being concerned about the client."

*Cultural discussions silenced.* The theme, cultural discussions silenced, was reported by two supervisees in two different supervision groups and refers to negative

experiences in which supervisors or supervisees were resistant to discussing cultural issues and negative experiences in which supervisors stifled or dismissed cultural discussions that were initiated by supervisees. For example, one supervisee described how the supervisor silenced a cultural discussion that she initiated:

I think it is very hard to talk about culture with [my supervisor]. . . . I will describe a client to [the supervisor] and I will describe behaviors and leave out culture for instance. So [my supervisor] will say, will diagnose and it is usually an Axis II diagnosis. I will try and describe some more and say this is culturally appropriate for this person and whatever it happens to be. But I think it is glossed over and it is really like, “I don’t want to talk about it. I don’t want to hear [about culture] because it really isn’t a factor.”

*How do positive and negative experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision impact the supervisory relationship?*

In response to the second research question, participants described the relationships in multicultural supervision (see Table 2); five major themes emerged including degree of connection, equality, alliances, impact of cultural identity on relationships, and other supervisor characteristics impacting relationships. The themes associated with the impact of participants’ positive and negative experiences in multicultural supervision also are responsive to the second research question. Major themes associated with the impact of positive experiences include cohesion/bonding, safety, and awareness. Major themes associated with the impact of negative experiences include supervisee withdrawal, decreased feelings of competence, and improvement.

#### *Relationships in Multicultural Supervision*

*Degree of connection.* The degree of connection that participants reported regarding relationships in supervision ranges from feeling connected (e.g., comfortable, relaxed, close, cohesive, united relationships, relationships characterized by ease and

Table 2

*Major Themes Associated with Research Question Two*


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Research Question Two: How do positive and negative experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision impact the supervisory relationship?

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General description of supervisory relationships

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Degree of connection

Equality

Alliances

Impact of cultural identity on relationships

Other supervisor characteristics impacting relationships.

Impact of positive experiences in multicultural supervision

Cohesion/bonding

Safety

Awareness

Impact of negative experiences in multicultural supervision

Supervisee withdrawal

Decreased feelings of competence

Improvement

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predictability, safety, openness to feedback) to perceiving a lack of connection (e.g., supervisees not engaged, lack of safety in relationships, relationships characterized by misperceptions or miscommunication, lack of cohesion, resistance to feedback). When

describing feelings of connection in supervision a supervisee stated, “We are all there to support each other and so I really feel like our group is really, really cohesive.” In contrast, another supervisee described feeling a lack of connection in supervision, “I just don’t feel comfortable, period.” Supervisors and supervisees described relationships characterized by connection in four of the six sets of participants. In two sets of participants, supervisors reported a higher degree of connection in supervisory relationships than reported by the supervisees.

*Equality.* The theme of equality refers to relationships characterized by shared distribution of power among the supervisor and supervisees or supervisory relationships in which the evaluative role of the supervisor is de-emphasized. A supervisee described how the supervisor’s theoretical orientation influenced relationships in the group:

I think [the supervisor’s] theory makes it a little easier too, with coming from a multicultural feminist theory, and feminism, as far as setting the playing [field] and asking us if there is anything we want on the agenda so that we all feel, I feel, like I have a fair say and everybody else in the group has their fair say.

*Alliances.* The theme, alliances, refers to differential bonds between members of the supervision group. One supervisor described an effort at maintaining equal degrees of closeness with all supervisees; thereby avoiding alliances. Supervisors and supervisees indicated that relationships established prior to becoming involved in supervision (e.g., supervisor previously served as an instructor for supervisees, supervisees had previous classes together) benefited supervisory relationships in all instances but one. In this case, the supervisor viewed the prior relationship between two supervision group members as potentially disruptive to the group process. Several supervisees described feeling closer to other members of the supervision group than the supervisor. One supervisee described the alliance that formed among supervision group members against the supervisor, “I

kind of feel like we are from the same wave, that people are not connecting very well with [the supervisor]. . . . We've talked about this after supervision . . . we felt like we were wasting our time and we hadn't drawn anything from it [supervision]."

*Impact of cultural identity on relationships.* This theme refers to participants' beliefs about the impact of perceived cultural similarities and dissimilarities between supervisors and supervisees and among group members on the supervisory relationships. Perceived cultural similarities between supervisors and supervisees and among group members were generally described as having a positive impact on supervisory relationships. For example, a supervisor stated,

I think it [perceived cultural similarities] makes it easy for us to relate to each other. Like, they can understand where I am coming from and I can understand some of the things that they are going through as well and how the things that they go through have an impact on what they do and how they are developing as a counselor.

In contrast, some participants viewed perceived cultural similarities as having a negative or limiting effect on supervisory relationships. A supervisor stated, "While our similarities bind us together, I think that it also limits all of us in some aspects, in terms of thinking broadly about multicultural issues because they are not necessarily present in our group."

Participants regarded perceived cultural dissimilarities as having a positive, negative, or neutral impact on supervisory relationships. A supervisee reported perceiving the supervisor to be almost completely culturally opposite from the way the supervisee identified culturally and that their cultural differences were beneficial to their relationship. The supervisee stated, "I felt that the way [the supervisor] looks at things sometimes are different from the way that I look at it, but I think it is in a good way." Some

participants reported that perceived cultural differences had a neutral impact or had no impact on supervisory relationships while others reported a more negative impact of perceived cultural differences. For example, one supervisee described how perceived spiritual/religious dissimilarities with her supervisor negatively affected their relationship, “I think that limits what I feel like I can say to my supervisor because, you know, religion is such a touchy subject, especially when it comes to counseling or any setting like that.”

Another theme that emerged related to the impact of perceived cultural dissimilarities on supervisory relationships is the idea of threshold--that cultural diversity is generally perceived positively, until the point where a participant views someone as very different than themselves culturally. Once the threshold of cultural difference is crossed, cultural dissimilarities are believed to have a negative impact on supervisory relationships. For example, a female supervisor described experiences with a supervisee who differed from her on the cultural dimensions of race, gender, and religious/spiritual identity:

I think there was someone who was very different from me. He was, um, his ideas about, I felt like his ideas about counseling, about supervision, about who I was as a person, about who he was as a person, really inhibited the supervisory relationship. I had to get a lot of supervision when I was working with him!

A supervisee who perceived differences with the supervisor on the cultural dimensions of age, religious/spiritual identity, and worldview stated, “I don’t feel like I connect as well with my supervisor. I feel like it is because it’s culturally very different. I just feel like [the supervisor] is very different from me, so I have a hard time in supervision.”



The theme of threshold occurred in two supervisor interviews and three supervisee interviews.

*Other supervisor characteristics impacting relationships.* Supervisors and supervisees described supervisor characteristics perceived as contributing to positive supervisory relationships including flexibility (e.g., not rigid in thinking or policy, understanding, responsive to student needs), accessibility (e.g., able to be reached outside of supervision sessions, gives supervisees home and cell phone numbers), caring (e.g., demonstrates interest and concern regarding supervisees lives), fun (e.g., plans end of semester celebrations), empowering (e.g., encourages supervisees to develop their own style, find their own voice), and more culturally knowledgeable than supervisees (e.g., deeper level of understanding of cultural issues, more experience with diverse client populations).

#### *Impact of Positive Experiences in Multicultural Supervision*

*Cohesion/bonding.* Five supervisors and three supervisees reported that positive experiences regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision lead to increased cohesion or bonding in supervisory relationships. One supervisee described the impact of the positive experience of empowering a supervisee to address a cultural issue at the supervisee's internship site:

I think that she [the supervisee] knows or believes that if she needs anything, like, she can come to me and be herself. She will come in there [to group supervision ] sometimes and just be like whatever, like I am angry and I don't care and I know y'all are going to ask me about it so here it is! So she is bonded to the group a lot. It's a good space.

*Safety.* Four supervisors and five supervisees reported that positive experiences regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision lead to increased safety, security, and

willingness to take risks in supervision. One supervisee felt increased safety in the supervisory relationship after the supervisor called attention to how the supervisee's personal life experiences were creating a blind-spot in the supervisee's work with a particular client:

It just made me trust [the supervisor] more because I just feel like when I know that you [the supervisor] are going to bring up stuff that I am not going to feel comfortable with so that I can help the client, I know that you are looking out for both of our [supervisee and client] best interests. . . . Maybe because I was able to share that part about my life and [the supervisor] didn't judge or anything like that.

*Awareness.* One supervisor and four supervisees reported that positive experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision resulted in increased awareness of cultural issues that are present in the supervision group and cultural issues with clients. For example, one supervisee stated that feedback from supervision group members helped the supervisee realize that some of the supervisee's cultural norms were preventing the discussion of religion and spirituality with African American clients. A supervisor described how the positive experience of sharing personal knowledge of culturally diverse populations lead to increased supervisee awareness of cultural issues with clients, "It helps them [supervisees] understand people in a better way."

#### *Impact of Negative Experiences in Multicultural Supervision*

*Supervisee withdrawal.* The theme, supervisee withdrawal, was reported by two supervisors and four supervisees as a consequence of negative experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision. Supervisee withdrawal may include becoming quiet in supervision, reducing communication with the supervisor, shutting-down, and decreased investment in supervision. For example, a supervisee described the impact of feeling judged by the supervisor, "I'm feeling like I am not getting what I need. . . . When I am

there [in supervision] I am not negative, but I prefer not to have to go and have individual supervision with [the supervisor] anymore.”

*Decreased feelings of competence.* One supervisor and two supervisees in different supervision groups reported decreased feelings of competence following a negative experience regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision. A supervisor reported wondering if the lack of depth during multicultural discussions in supervision could be attributed to the supervisor’s own level of multicultural competency. After experiencing discomfort and anxiety while receiving feedback on counseling skills, one supervisee stated, “I thought I was presenting something that I did well, and maybe not so much anymore!”

*Improvement.* One supervisor and one supervisee in different supervision groups reported that in some circumstances, a negative experience regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision could result in improved supervisory relationships because of increased openness to feedback or increased discussion of cultural issues. For example, a supervisor reported that a negative experience in which the supervisor felt judged by a supervisee resulted in increased discussion of cultural issues and an improved supervisory relationship. The supervisor stated, “I realized how [the supervisee] saw me and that was um, from that point forward, that’s when we really started talking about our cultures and how things were different.”

*How do supervisors and supervisees conceptualize the development of supervisee multicultural counseling competence?*

In response to the third research question, participants described their perceptions of indicators of multicultural counseling competency (see Table 3); major themes include

Table 3

*Major Themes Associated with Research Question Three*


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Research Question Three: How do supervisors and supervisees conceptualize the development of supervisee multicultural counseling competence?

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Indicators of perceived supervisee multicultural counseling competence

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Client response

Supervisee awareness and interventions

Lack of insensitivity

Evaluation of multicultural counseling competence

Factors contributing to perceived supervisee multicultural counseling competence

Supervisor techniques and characteristics

Supervision processes and experiences

Clinical experience

Coursework

Supervision has no impact on multicultural counseling competence

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client response, supervisee awareness and interventions, lack of insensitivity, and evaluation of multicultural counseling competency. Participants also described factors that contribute to perceived supervisee multicultural counseling competency: major themes include supervisor techniques and characteristics, supervision process and experiences, clinical experience, coursework, and supervision has no impact on multicultural counseling competency.

### *Indicators of Perceived Supervisee Multicultural Counseling Competency*

*Client response.* Participants reported that clients' responses to counseling or the counselor are an indication of the counselor's level of multicultural counseling competence. Client response may involve client's verbal statements about the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions, non-verbal behaviors, the depth of discussion in session, continued use of counseling services, and client progress or change. For example, one supervisee stated, "I gauge it if I can see them leave with something, or if they say they learned something, or if they say, 'Oh, that made a lot of sense to me.'" Client response was the most frequently cited indicator of multicultural counseling competence for supervisees; however, only one supervisor expressed this theme.

*Supervisee awareness and interventions.* Participants stated that supervisee consideration of cultural and contextual variables when working with clients, supervisee discussion of cultural issues in session with clients, supervisee awareness that cultural diversity exists and that people are unique, and supervisee self-awareness of personal biases and cultural background are indicators of multicultural counseling competence. One supervisor stated:

I think they [supervisees] are doing a good job when they are able to freely discuss culture and differences and how that may have an impact on the counseling relationship. That they are also aware of who they are culturally and how that plays a part in what they do with their clients.

The theme, supervisee awareness and interventions, was the most commonly cited indicator of multicultural counseling competency by supervisors; only a third of supervisees expressed this theme.

*Lack of insensitivity.* The theme, lack of insensitivity, refers to the perception that supervisees possess multicultural counseling competence if no evidence to the contrary

exists (e.g., rigid thinking, derogatory statements about a cultural group, judgmental).

One supervisor stated, “I haven’t noted behaviors that indicate insensitivity. At least not obvious insensitivity where it was something where I felt like they would be insensitive or incompetent to address those cultural issues.” Half of the supervisors in this study reported this theme; however, no supervisees expressed the theme, lack of insensitivity.

*Evaluation of multicultural counseling competency.* The theme, evaluation of multicultural counseling competency, refers to participant statements regarding the difficulty associated with assessing multicultural counseling competency or the fact that multicultural counseling competency is a journey. One supervisor stated, “I don’t know that there is some sort of hallmark and now all of the sudden you are multiculturally competent.” This theme was expressed by two supervisors and one supervisee.

#### *Factors Contributing to Perceived Supervisee Multicultural Counseling Competency*

*Supervisor techniques and characteristics.* Participants identified supervisor techniques and characteristics including the supervisor’s use of appropriate self-disclosure regarding cultural identity or struggles with working with culturally diverse clients, modeling the discussion and consideration of cultural issues related to client work, and supervisor expertise or specialized knowledge based on counseling experience or education and training. One supervisor described perceptions about what helps supervisees develop multicultural counseling competence:

I know that I have talked about my own limitations that I have felt like I have had, my own struggles . . . . So I think maybe talking about my own process and knowing that I do have my own challenges that I am working on, maybe that has been beneficial.

A supervisee described how the supervisor’s use of modeling the discussion and consideration of cultural issues related to client work contributed to the supervisee’s

development of multicultural counseling competency, “I think [my supervisor] did a good of bringing those [cultural] issues into the group. Um, that made us feel free to talk about those [cultural issues].” Supervisor techniques and characteristics were identified by three supervisors and three supervisees as factors that contributed to the development of supervisee multicultural counseling competency.

*Supervision process and experiences.* Participants identified supervision processes and experiences that contributed to the development of supervisee multicultural counseling competency including discussion of clients’ cultural context, case presentations, feedback from supervision group members on working with clients, learning techniques for working with a specific client population, and lived experience. The subtheme of lived experience refers to the perception that an individual with similar cultural characteristics or life experiences as a client has expertise in working with that particular client population (e.g., a Latina supervision group member is an expert at working with Latino and Latina clients). One supervisee described how experiences in supervision have contributed to the supervisee’s ability to work effectively with culturally diverse clients:

I think the main thing is being competent in working with a certain population. African American population is a big one because one of our interns [in the supervision group] works only with African American clients, like her program is set up for African American female clients and so we talk a lot about that because she works with a lot of techniques that work with African American females and what to do with African American females. And she has had to do a lot of research into that. So I hear a lot of that and when I get African American females [clients], I am kind of like, “Whew, okay good. I kind of know this.” So that kind of takes some pressure off. . .

Half of the supervisors and supervisees expressed the theme of supervision processes and experiences.

*Clinical experience.* The theme, clinical experience, includes practice working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds, exposure to clients from diverse cultural backgrounds, and increased empathy, defined as making an active effort to develop a deeper understanding of clients' worldviews. One supervisee described the process of developing increased empathy for a diverse client population:

When I was really struggling with some students, it was suggested by some group members to go and see what their life is like. So I went to what they do when they are not at school. I went to some of their churches. I went and saw where they lived and I think that really changes your perspective.

One supervisor and two supervisees expressed the theme of clinical experience.

*Coursework.* The theme, coursework, results from participant statements that indicate didactic instruction contributed to supervisee development of multicultural competence. For example, one supervisee stated, "Cultural competency is like every class. . . . I feel it is such a big deal here [in the counselor training program], and it should be." The theme, coursework, was identified as a contributing factor in the development of multicultural competence by three supervisees; no supervisors expressed this theme.

*Supervision has no impact on multicultural counseling competence.* Three supervisees indicated that the supervision had no impact on their development of multicultural counseling competency. For example, a supervisee stated, "As far as the cultural thing, I think we have covered in pretty extensively up until this point [through coursework] so I don't know if I could say that it was supervision specially that's influenced that." No supervisors expressed this theme.

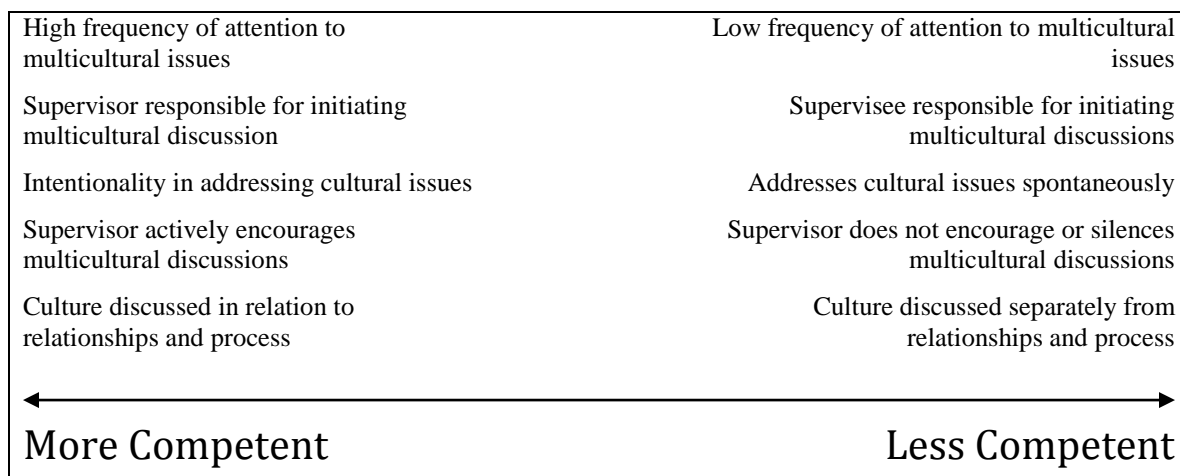


## Discussion

In response to the first research question, “How are cultural issues addressed in supervision?”, five major themes emerged including frequency, responsibility for initiation of cultural discussion, supervisor’s role in addressing cultural issues, degree of intentionality, and scope of attention to culture. Although prior research indicated that approximately 15% of time in supervision is spent addressing cultural issues (Constantine, 1997), participants in this study reported a range of frequency from addressing cultural issues in every supervision session to very rarely or never addressing cultural issues in supervision. Consistent with prior research findings (Duan & Roehlke, 2001), two supervisors in this study reported attending to cultural issues in supervision at a higher frequency than was perceived by their supervisees and three supervisors reported bearing the primary responsibility for initiating cultural discussions, while the supervisees who worked with these supervisors viewed the initiation of cultural discussions as shared or primarily supervisee initiated. A possible explanation for the discrepancies in the reports of these supervisors and supervisees is the supervisors’ degree of intentionality in attending to cultural issues. In this study, supervisors’ and supervisees’ perceptions of frequency and responsibility for initiating cultural discussions were more likely to be consistent when supervisors used planned multicultural activities, addressed cultural issues early in the supervisory relationship, addressed cultural issues directly (e.g., use the word ‘culture’), provided a rationale for addressing cultural issues, and checked-in with supervisees or asked questions about cultural issues in relation to client work.

The five major themes not only describe how cultural issues are addressed in supervision, but speak to supervisor multicultural competency. When presented along a continuum, the themes represent a range of more ideal to less ideal ways of attending to cultural issues in supervision (see Figure 1) and may be used as a training model for counseling supervisors. Additionally, the five themes are consistent with the domains of the Multicultural Supervision Competencies (i.e., supervisor and supervisee focused personal development, client conceptualization, skills and interventions, process and, outcome/evaluation; Ancis & Ladany, 2001).

Participants' positive and negative experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision also provide examples of how attention is given to cultural issues in supervision with varying degrees of competence. The major themes associated with positive experiences in multicultural supervision include supervisor role, cultural similarities as positive, consideration of cultural context, receiving helpful feedback, making invisible cultural differences visible, and empowerment. Major themes associated with negative experiences in multicultural supervision include discomfort, lack of balance, being judged, pushing an agenda, and cultural discussions silenced. Participants' negative experiences were often a result of less competent supervisory interventions. The positive and negative experiences reported by participants in this study are consistent with the reports of participants in earlier research (e.g., Burkard et al., 2006, Constantine & Sue, 2007; Fukuyama, 1994). Two interesting discrepancies emerged in relation to the positive experiences reported by supervisees in this study. First, supervisees most commonly reported positive experiences related to receiving helpful feedback on client related issues; no supervisors reported this theme. This discrepancy may indicate that



*Figure 1.* Continuum of Supervisor Multicultural Competence

supervisees' goals in multicultural supervision may be more heavily focused on obtaining counseling skills while supervisors may focus more on other multicultural supervision goals (e.g., encouraging supervisee professional development or personal awareness).

Secondly, two supervisees reported that they did not have any positive experiences regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision. In contrast, the two supervisors who worked with these supervisees did report positive experiences. One of these supervisors reported a positive experience regarding attention to cultural issues with another member of the supervision group who did not participate in this study (i.e., discussing how the supervisee's cultural norms affected counseling with specific client populations). The other supervisor reported a positive experience pertaining to the entire supervision group (i.e., addressing cultural differences early in the relationship). The lack of positive experiences reported by these supervisees seems to be a result of very low frequency of attention to cultural issues in supervision in combination with the negative experiences of feeling judged and having cultural discussions silenced or dismissed by their supervisor. Additionally, it seems that the lack of positive experiences reported by these supervisees

was outside of the awareness of their supervisors. This finding speaks to the importance of supervisors' actively seeking supervisee feedback. Formative and summative evaluations of the supervisor and the supervisory process may help supervisors best meet the needs of their supervisees.

In response to the second research question, "How do positive and negative experiences with attention to cultural issues in supervision impact the supervisory relationship?", five major themes emerged that described the supervisory relationships of participants in this study including degree of connection, equality, alliances, impact of cultural identity on relationships, and other supervisor characteristics impacting relationships. The theme, degree of connection, mirrors the continuum of supervisor competency (see Figure 1). Supervisory relationships in which multicultural issues were addressed competently were generally characterized by high levels of connection. The theme, impact of cultural identity on relationships, provided interesting information. Previous research indicated that supervisees often perceive working with a supervisor from a different racial background than their own to be a more positive and growth producing experience than working with a racially similar supervisor (Pope-Davis et al., 2003; Wieling & Marshall, 1999). In this study, participants also generally reported that perceived cultural dissimilarities between supervisors and supervisees positively affected the supervisory relationship; however, several participants seemed to have a threshold for cultural diversity. When a supervisor or supervisee perceived another person as very different from themselves, the impact of perceived cultural dissimilarities on the supervisory relationship became negative. This finding can be interpreted numerous ways. For example, it is possible that when participants described an experience that indicated a

threshold for cultural diversity, they expressed their beliefs about cultural diversity more openly than during the rest of the interview. In other words, participants may have removed the mask of social desirability when talking about a threshold for cultural diversity. Another possibility is that participants may have only addressed their cultural biases on a surface level and individuals who are considered very diverse highlight their biases. Regardless of how the threshold for cultural diversity is interpreted, it is clear that to move towards multiculturally competent supervision and counseling, both supervisors and supervisees must engage in additional examination of personal biases.

The themes associated with the impact of participants' positive and negative experiences in multicultural supervision also are responsive to the second research question. Major themes associated with the impact of positive experiences include cohesion/bonding, safety, and awareness. Major themes associated with the impact of negative experiences include supervisee withdrawal, decreased feelings of competence, and improvement. These findings are generally consistent with previous research (e.g., Burkard et al., 2006; Constantine & Sue, 2007) that indicates positive experiences have positive impacts on supervisory relationships and negative experiences have negative impacts on supervisory relationships; however, one new finding emerged from this study. Two supervisees reported that a negative experience with attention to cultural issues in supervision actually resulted in improvement of the supervisory relationship. It is possible that a negative experience can call attention to areas in supervision that could be improved upon or could motivate supervisors and supervisees to change their interactions in supervision. This finding has important implications for supervisors in that it speaks to the importance of open dialogue in supervision. If supervisors and supervisees are able to

provide each other with constructive feedback, even a negative experience may become growth producing. In order for supervisees to feel comfortable providing supervisors with feedback on their experiences in supervision, supervisors must actively create a safe supervisory environment.

In response to the third research question, “How do supervisors and supervisees conceptualize the development of supervisee multicultural counseling competence?”, participants described their perceptions of indicators of multicultural counseling competency; major themes include client response, supervisee awareness and interventions, lack of insensitivity, and evaluation of multicultural counseling competency. The theme, client response, was the most commonly reported indicator of multicultural counseling competency by supervisees. The fact that supervisees measure their multicultural counseling competency primarily by client response may indicate that the supervisees in this study were not aware of or were not able to operationalize of the dimensions of multicultural competency (i.e., knowledge, awareness, and skills; Sue et al., 1992) in spite of their multicultural training. Unawareness of or difficulty in operationalizing the dimensions of multicultural counseling competence may have also been an issue for some supervisors in this study, as evidenced by the fact that one supervisor reported client response was the primary indicator of multicultural counseling competency and two supervisors reported that the lack of obvious cultural insensitivity indicated multicultural counseling competency. In other words, although dimensions of multicultural competency have been clearly delineated in the counseling literature (Sue et al.), both supervisees and supervisors in this study measured their levels of multicultural competency based on factors that are not indicative of multicultural counseling

competency. This finding may indicate that although supervisors and supervisees are receiving an increasing amount of multicultural competency training (e.g., coursework, workshops), multicultural knowledge is not being integrated into counseling and supervisory practice. This finding speaks to the need for additional training and education in implementing and recognizing multiculturally competent counseling and supervisory interventions.

Participants also described factors that contribute to perceived supervisee multicultural counseling competency: major themes include supervisor techniques and characteristics, supervision process and experiences, clinical experience, coursework, and supervision has no impact on multicultural counseling competency. Three of the supervisees in this study reported that supervision had no impact on their ability to work effectively with culturally diverse clients. No supervisors reported this theme, indicating that the lack of effectiveness in supervision was outside the supervisors' awareness and again highlights the need for formative and summative feedback for supervisors. The supervisees who reported that supervision had no impact on their development of multicultural counseling competency were involved in supervision characterized by low frequency of attention to cultural issues in supervision, low levels of intentionality in addressing cultural issues, and several negative experiences with regard to attention to cultural issues in supervision. This finding speaks to the need for more specific training for supervisors on what constitutes multiculturally competent supervision. Figure 1 may be used as a training model for counseling supervisors. Supervisors who strive to provide multicultural supervision characterized by a high frequency of attention to cultural issues, the supervisor taking responsibility for initiating cultural discussions, intentionality in

addressing cultural issues, the supervisor's encouragement of cultural discussions, and attention to cultural issues in relation to supervisory and counseling relationships and processes may expect more positive supervisory outcomes (i.e., satisfaction with supervisory relationships, increased supervisee development of multicultural counseling competency).

### *Limitations and Future Directions*

This study has several limitations. First, although generalizability is not a goal of phenomenological research (Moustakas, 1994), the experiences of the participants in this study may provide an overly favorable impression of how cultural issues are addressed in supervision, primarily because of the characteristics of supervisors in this study. For example, the majority of supervisors in this study had completed coursework and workshops related to multicultural counseling competence and coursework, workshops, and supervised internships related to counseling supervision. Previous research regarding supervisor training (Constantine, 1997) indicated that the training of the supervisors in this study may not be typical. In addition, all of the supervisors in this study, with the exception of one, provide university based supervision at a large, urban university that has a culturally diverse student population and focuses heavily on multicultural competence training in its counseling program. Secondly, social desirability may have influenced participants' responses. Two supervisors and one supervisee expressed feeling uncomfortable or nervous during the semi-structured interviews. It is possible that these participants may have felt as though they were being judged and as a result tried to provide socially desirable answers. A third limitation of the study is that no formal measures of multicultural competence (e.g., written assessments, case conceptualization



activities) were used. Assessment of multicultural competence was based on the perceptions of the supervisors and supervisees who participated in this study. Finally, to protect the confidentiality of the supervisees in this study, supervisors were not informed as to which of their supervisees were participating. This measure of participant protection may have led to more general findings.

Future research on the topic of attention to cultural issues in multicultural supervision should examine multicultural supervision in a manner that reduces the limitation of social desirability, for example, by observation of live or recorded supervision sessions. Future research should examine in more detail the experiences of supervisors and supervisees who are engaged in on-site supervision and supervisors and supervisees who live and work in less culturally diverse settings. Additionally, future research should further investigate the concept of threshold of cultural diversity (i.e., cultural differences perceived positively up until the point when a person is considered very different from one's self) and the impact of this phenomenon on multicultural supervision. Finally, several of the participants in this study indicated pride in a particular aspect of their cultural identity or dislike of a particular part of their cultural identity, which speaks to the idea of cultural identity development. Researchers (e.g., Constantine et al., 2005; Ladany et al., 1997) have examined the influence of the interaction of the supervisor's and supervisee's levels of racial identity development on supervisory relationships and outcomes; however, little attention has been given to the other aspects of cultural identity development (e.g., gender identity development, sexual identity development). Future research on multicultural supervision should incorporate various cultural identity development models.

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## APPENDIXES

### APPENDIX A

#### Interview Protocol-Supervisor Form

1. Please describe the goals of clinical supervision?
2. How do you define the term “culture”?
3. How do you describe your cultural identity?
4. What aspects of your cultural identity are similar to the cultural identities of your supervisees? How do you know?
5. What aspects of your cultural identity are different from the cultural identities of your supervisees? How do you know?
6. Please describe your relationship with the supervisees you are currently working with.
7. How do your cultural similarities and/or differences with your supervisees impact your relationships, if at all?
8. When you hear the term multicultural supervision, what comes to mind?
9. What role, if any, do cultural issues play in supervision?
10. How are cultural issues typically addressed in supervision?
11. What positive experiences, if any, have you had regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision with your current supervisees? Please describe.
12. How did that positive experience impact your relationships with your supervisees?

13. What negative experiences, if any, have you had regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision with your current supervisees? Please describe.
14. How did that negative experience impact your relationship with your supervisees?
15. How do you know if your supervisees are able to work effectively with clients who are culturally different than them?
16. What factors or experiences have contributed to your supervisees' abilities to work with culturally diverse clients?
17. What is your biggest strength as a clinical supervisor?
18. Has there ever been a time you found it difficult to utilize your strength? Please describe.
19. What was the experience of participating in this interview like for you?
20. How do you think participating in this study will impact supervision in the future, if at all?
21. What else would you like to add about your experiences in supervision?

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Protocol-Supervisee Form

1. Please describe the goals of clinical supervision?
2. How do you define the term “culture”?
3. How do you describe your cultural identity?
4. What aspects of your cultural identity are similar to the cultural identities of your supervisor and the members of your supervision group? How do you know?
5. What aspects of your cultural identity are different from the cultural identities of your supervisor and the members of your supervision group? How do you know?
6. Please describe your relationships with the supervisor and members of your supervision group you are currently working with.
7. How do your cultural similarities and/or differences impact your relationships, if at all?
8. When you hear the term multicultural supervision, what comes to mind?
9. What role, if any, do cultural issues play in supervision?
10. How are cultural issues typically addressed in supervision?
11. What positive experiences, if any, have you had regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision? Please describe.
12. How did that positive experience impact your relationships with your supervisor and the members of your supervision group?



13. What negative experiences, if any, have you had regarding attention to cultural issues in supervision? Please describe.
14. How did that negative experience impact your relationships with your supervisor and the members of your supervision group?
15. How do you know if you are able to work effectively with clients who are culturally different than them?
16. What factors or experiences have contributed to your abilities to work with culturally diverse clients?
17. What is your biggest strength as a counselor?
18. Has there ever been a time you found it difficult to utilize your strength? Please describe.
19. What was the experience of participating in this interview like for you?
20. How do you think participating in this study will impact supervision in the future, if at all?
21. What else would you like to add about your experiences in supervision?

## APPENDIX C

### Demographic Information Sheet

ID Number (to be completed by researcher): \_\_\_\_\_

### PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

Please complete the corresponding blanks or circle the most appropriate response for each of the items below.

For the purpose of this study, are you a **supervisor** or **supervisee**?

How long have you been involved in the supervision relationship that you are referring to in this study?                      Years: \_\_\_\_\_ Months: \_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:**    Male    Female    Transgender

**Race/Ethnicity:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Religious/Spiritual Identity:**

Christian    Jewish    Hindu    Muslim    Agnostic    Atheist    Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Degree of spiritual practice:    Practicing                      Somewhat Practicing                      Not Practicing

**Sexual Identity:** Heterosexual    Homosexual    Bisexual    Questioning

**Marital/Relationship Status:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Household Income:** Under \$20, 000      \$20,000-\$40,000      \$40,000-\$60,000  
 \$60,000-\$80,000      \$80,000-\$100,000      Over \$100,000

**Highest Degree Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Educational Enrollment:** \_\_\_\_\_

Months of counseling experience (pre-masters): \_\_\_\_\_

Months of counseling experience (post-masters): \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you ever had a course on multicultural counseling?** Yes/No

If yes, please specify number of courses: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you ever attended a workshop on multicultural counseling?** Yes/No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you ever attended a workshop on counseling supervision?** Yes/No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you ever taken a course on counseling supervision?** Yes/No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you completed a counseling supervision practicum or internship?** Yes/No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Which of the following best describes your current work setting (choose all that apply):**

Outpatient practice

School

Residential facility

Hospital

Community mental health

Career Center

University/Academia

Private practice

Other (please

specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe the client population that you currently work with:**

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**Areas of clinical/research interest:**

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Thank you for your participation!

## APPENDIX D

### Informed Consent Form

Georgia State University

Department of Counseling and Psychological Services

#### **Informed Consent**

**Title:** A Phenomenological Investigation of Supervisors' and Supervisees' Experiences with Attention to Cultural Issues in Supervision

**Principal Investigator:** Catherine Chang, Ph.D., LPC, NCC

**Student Principal Investigator:** Amy L. McLeod, Ed.S., LPC, NCC

**I. Purpose:** You are invited to take part in a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore supervisors' and supervisees' experiences with cultural issues in counseling supervision. Since you are involved in counseling supervision, either as a supervisor or supervisee, your input is valuable. A total of 5-6 supervisors and 10-12 supervisees will take part in this study. Taking part in this study will take about 60-100 minutes of your time.

**II. Procedures:** If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to take part in a face-to-face interview with Mrs. McLeod. The interview will be set up at a time and place that is best for you. You will be asked to share your experiences with cultural issues in supervision. The interview will take 60-100 minutes. It will be audio taped. The researchers will study the tapes and name common themes shared by participants. You will also be asked to fill out a demographic sheet. It will take 5-10 minutes. If you agree,

one of the researchers may contact you after the interview to make sure your story was understood and to give you the chance to share anything else you want to add. This process will take 10-15 minutes. If you do not want to be contacted for follow-up no one will contact you. To thank you for taking part in this study, you will get a ten dollar gift card.

**III. Risks:** There is a chance that taking part in this study may cause you mild emotional distress. You will be asked to share both positive and negative experiences that you have had in supervision. If you have had negative experiences, sharing them may upset you. If you feel emotional distress at any time during this study, please notify Amy McLeod (404-374-5818) or Dr. Catherine Chang (404-413-8196). They can give you a list of mental health resources. You will be responsible for all costs of such services.

**IV: Benefits:** You may not personally gain any benefits by taking part in this study. What you share may help counselor educators learn how to better train supervisors. Your story may also help supervisors better meet the needs of supervisees. Other supervisors and supervisees may be helped by relating to your story.

**V: Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:** Taking part in this study is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop taking part in the study at any time. No matter what you decide, you will not lose any benefits that you would otherwise get, including the gift card. You will not be penalized in any way for not taking part in this study. If you are a counselor trainee, your grade will not be impacted.

**VI: Confidentiality:** We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by the law.

We will use a study number, rather than your name on study records. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally. Only the researchers will have access to your data. All tapes will be destroyed when the study ends. A transcript of each tape with all identifiable facts removed will be kept in a locked file until the study has been published or presented.

Any contact data will be kept in a locked file away from other data. The contact data will be destroyed after follow-up with participants. If you are a supervisee, your supervisor will not know whether you choose to take part or not in this study.

**VII: Contact Persons:** Call Amy McLeod at 404-374-5818, or Catherine Chang, Ph.D. at 404-413-8196 if you have questions about this study. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or [svogtner1@gsu.edu](mailto:svogtner1@gsu.edu).

**VIII. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:** We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep. If you are willing to volunteer for this research and be audio recorded, please sign below.

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Participant

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Date

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Student Principal Investigator

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Date